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MENDEL BEILIS

The Story of My Sufferings

Translated by
HARRISON GOLDBERG

With Introductions by
HERMAN BERNSTEIN
Editor of The Jewish Tribune

and

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MENDEL BEILIS

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The publishers of Mendel Beilis' memoirs were confronted with a double opportunity. The first was of national concern for the Jewish people. It was not only Mendel Beilis who was indicted but the Jewish people; it was not Beilis alone who was acquitted of the terrible charge of ritual murder but his entire race. It is thus important to preserve this notorious incident in the history of Jewish life in the Diaspora in the form of a book, to record the fate which almost befell every Russian Jew, as also the sufferings which fell to the share of Mendel Beilis, scapegoat for a people.

The second purpose of this publication is to ensure in some slight measure the continued existence of the martyr. Mendel Beilis could very easily have benefitted financially from the tale of his own experiences and that of his people. He refused, however. He regarded those experiences too holy for commercialization.

This volume—the publishers believe—will give the Jewish people the opportunity to repay in slight measure the onerous duties which Beilis undertook for the Jewish people, to show him a portion of the honor befitting a martyr for his people.

The publishers herewith wish to express their thanks to Herman Bernstein and Arnold D. Margolin, attorney for Mr. Beilis, both of whom gave themselves freely in counsel and effort to ensure the publication of this volume.

THE PUBLISHERS.

INTRODUCTION

By HERMAN BERNSTEIN

While the Russian Government was setting the stage in Keiv in 1913 for the medieval trial of Mendel Beilis, an obscure Jew, on the charge of having murdered Andrey Yustchinsky for ritual purposes, the entire civilized world expressed abhorrence of the hideous libel. The foremost statesmen, scientists, authors, and clergymen of many lands, and the enlightened press of the world denounced Russia for reviving this ancient and exploded superstition for the purpose of arousing race prejudice and inciting the Russian masses to massacres of the Jews. Powerful appeals to the Russian authorities, to desist from the shameful proceeding, were issued by the most distinguished in England, France, Germany, and the United States. In Russia, too, a memorial was signed by the leading lawyers, authors, and publicists. The liberal organs of public opinion criticised the Government for permitting the indictment presented against the accused to contain even a suggestion of the absurd charge.

The case divided Russia into two camps. The reactionaries, led by the Department of Justice, employed every disreputable device to discredit the Jewish people, by charging that they practised this unspeakable crime. The progressive elements in Russia, who were genuinely concerned in the welfare of the Russian people, humiliated by the dreadful spectacle that the Russian Government presented to the eyes of the world, repudiated this vile attack as vigorously as the censor would permit. There were some Russians whose protests were so energetic that

they paid dearly for giving voice to their consciences. Many arrests were made in various parts of the Empire, hundreds of newspapers and magazines were confiscated and suppressed, and their editors and contributors were in some instances imprisoned, in others heavily fined. Even after the trial the heroic and patriotic men who sought to defend the honor of their country were relentlessly pursued by the baffled bureaucrats whom a gleam civilization frightened from their prey.

The Beilis case presented the most extraordinary spectacle in the annals of a civilized state. It was unique even among the ritual murder trials in history. There was not a shred even of circumstantial evidence against the accused, not the semblance of a fact that justified even the suspicion of the slightest infraction by him of law or morals. While he was confined in prison and during the progress of his trial, practically all intelligent Russians felt, as now they are convinced, that the Czarist Government knew from the outset who the murderers of Andrey Yustchinsky were, and it was thoroughly understood that in its efforts for political purposes to convict a Jew on the charge of ritual murder, the Government was deliberately shielding the actual criminals. From the beginning, the indictment of Beilis was recognized as an absurdly clumsy fabrication, but the immediate exigencies of the most powerful political elements in Russia demanded the concoction of this conspiracy against the Jewish people, and thus reason, justice, and humanity were defied with unblushing brutality.

Mendel Beilis has written the story of his sufferings as a victim selected by the now dead Czarist Government of Russia.

He has produced a human document of extraordinary significance and interest. Of course, as the victim and scapegoat, he could not know while he was in prison all the details, the motives and the intrigues behind the scenes of the drama staged by the Russian reactionaries and Black

Hundreds. Nor was he in position to know of all the efforts that were made by liberal Russians and by eminent Russian Jewish jurists to expose the hideous conspiracy which was directed against the entire Jewish people. The history of the historic Beilis affair is recorded by the great Russian Jewish jurist, Dr. Oscar Gruzenberg, chief of the counsel for the defense, and by the eminent lawyer and publicist, Dr. Arnold Margolin, who also played a most important role in the Beilis affair.

Mendel Beilis in this volume tells the story of his sufferings, his sorrows and his experiences. He has written it simply and directly, without embellishments and without quoting from the stenographic record of the great trial, at which the flower of liberal Russia was battling against the dark forces of bigotry, corruption and superstition.

On September 11, 1913, I published in *The Independent*, of New York, "An Open Letter to the Czar of Russia," in which I reviewed Russian misgovernment during that period, culminating in the Beilis case. The letter, which was unsigned, attracted world-wide attention and elicited widespread editorial comment.

I reproduce it here, in full:

"SIRE—When you ascended the throne of the Russian Empire the expectations of your people ran high. They looked forward to a more humane reign than that which had just ended. They were yearning for reforms, for a sympathetic bond between the palace and the huts of the hungry and the homes of the oppressed. You were regarded as a young man of liberal tendencies, of advanced views. After your father's reactionary reign the Russian people longed for relief. But, alas, what an awakening was theirs!

"Little by little the vision of a better day faded. Your people began to despair. Your supposed idealism failed to manifest itself in any of your acts. The evil genius of Pobedonostzeff, of the Holy Synod, reigned supreme while he lived, and still rules Russia from his grave. A long list

of charlatans and mad monks and illiterate fortune-tellers, beginning with Philippe, the barber of Marseilles, and ending with the Monk Ilhodor and Rasputin, have been in the ascendancy and have exerted a baneful influence at your court. Those who have counseled reform and have advocated liberal tendencies have become discredited and have been driven away.

"The condition of the longsuffering nationalities of your Empire instead of ameliorating has become even more tragic. Though you have special cause to be lenient with your Polish subjects, Poland has been bent under added burdens. Finland has become an autonomous government without autonomy, and it is gradually becoming converted into a Russian province. The Baptists and the Roman Catholics have suffered oppression. The Jews have experienced during your reign persecutions far more cruel than those which prevailed during the Middle Ages. New restrictions and new policies of hatred have been devised and directed against them. They have been driven from pillar to post. When the ghastly Kishineff massacres raged, the world was shocked. The civilized nations protested. It is no longer a secret that these massacres were staged, planned, organized and executed by the aid of your Government. Your former director of the Secret Police Department of the Russian Empire, M. Alexander Lopukhin, who investigated the cause of the massacres, reported to the late Premier Stolypin that the anti-Jewish proclamations inciting the populace against the Jews were printed on presses owned by the Police Department and were distributed by members of the Police Department.

"Then you were drawn into a war with Japan by Admiral Alexeyeff and others of your advisers—men who sought the personal gain of power and wealth, and who led Russia headlong to ruin. The army and navy proved so demoralized by graft and debauchery that in her struggle Russia revealed herself as a colossus upon feet of clay.

Humiliated on land and sea, it was only the ingenious statesmanship of Count Witte at Portsmouth that Russia was saved from utter disgrace.

"On October 17 (Russian style), 1905, you signed the manifesto granting a constitution to Russia. You signed that document under pressure. You were frightened by the sweeping wave of revolution that was rising over the Russian land. You were informed that only such a measure could save your throne. By adopting it your throne has, for a time, been saved. On the day after the manifesto was issued, a counter-revolution was organized. Massacres broke out in hundreds of towns in various parts of Russia at the same hour and upon the same signal. Jews and intellectuals were attacked, plundered and killed. The gallows was revived in Russia. Men, women and children were hanged for offenses punishable in civilized countries by a few months' imprisonment only. The prisons became overcrowded. The best of the Russian people were thrown into dungeons, or exiled to forsaken and pest-ridden regions to die there of starvation.

"The story of the first and second Dumas is well known to the whole world. Every aspiration for liberty and justice that found vent in those national assemblies was withered in the bud. Every manifestation of independence was penalized. The voice of the people was silenced. The causes of the dispersion of the Russian parliaments and of the falling of the ceiling where the Duma assembled upon the seats of the opposition deputies, the imprisonment of the signers of the Viborg manifesto, the murder of the distinguished Jewish Duma deputies, Professor Herzenstein and M. Yollo, by the Black Hundred organization, with the aid of Dr. Dubrovin, who is still one of your favorites—all these are no longer secrets to the outside world.

"The restrictions directed against the Jews of Russia assumed shocking forms. Jewish soldiers who fought bravely in the Russo-Japanese war were driven from

Moscow upon their return from the battlefield as soon as they could leave the hospital. They had no rights of domicile there. The Governor-General of Moscow, Hershelman, ordered the expulsion of a twelve-month-old Jewish boy, stating in his official order that "the boy may be dangerous to the constituted regime of the Russian Empire."

"Your father, Alexander III, once said to Count Sergius Witte:

"'Is it true that you are so fond of the Jews?'

"Count Witte replied:

"'Permit me to answer you by another question. Suppose that you gather all the Jews of Russia, place them in ships on the Black Sea and then sink the ships. You would not do that, would you? The Jews must live among us, with us. Therefore we must give them the opportunity to live as we do. In my opinion, the only way of solving the Jewish question is to give the Jews equal rights.'

"Alexander III was silent for a while and then remarked:

"'Perhaps you are right.'

"You have gone much further than your father in your anti-Jewish policies. If you do not know, you should know that the Jews have contributed much to the development of Russia. Rubinstein may be said to have founded the Russian school of music. Antokolsky has made Russian sculpture to rank high. Levitan, a Jewish landscape painter, has taught the Russian people how to admire the landscapes of their own country. Prof. Elie Metchnikoff, head of the Pasteur Institute in Paris, the greatest living biologist, who exiled himself from Russia, ascribes his love for science to the influence of his Jewish mother. He has declared that Russia has lost through the persecution of the Jews some of the greatest scientists. The literature, art and music of Russia have been popularized and made accessible in many lands outside of Russia by Jews.

"Many of the Jews whom you have cruelly oppressed

have come to America. They have adapted themselves here to the American conditions. They are making remarkable progress in every field of human activity. They have added to the wealth of the nation by their manufactures, their skill in innumerable trades which they practise here but were forbidden to practise in their native land. They have widened the spheres of commerce. They have become patriotic and law-abiding citizens. They and their adopted land have profited marvelously by the avidity with which they have availed themselves of the educational opportunities extended to them. Russia has lost and is suppressing forces which, if utilized, would develop her tremendous resources beyond the power of belief. How the Jews are regarded in this country may be surmised from the impressive manner in which Congress expressed its protest against the dishonor by Russia of American passports when borne by Jews. The violation of the Treaty of 1832 by Russia, by her discrimination against Jews, was regarded an affront to the American people. The unanimous voice of America should have convinced you that the Jews have made good as American citizens.

"Your advisers are misleading you with regard to the Jews in Russia. That is the most charitable view to take. To divert your attention from their own incompetency, they are pointing to the Jews as the cause of all the troubles that exist in Russia. To divert the attention of the Russian people from their real enemies, the officials are inciting the bestial passions of the mob against the Jews.

"The best Jews of Russia are either in exile, in prison, or have been stifled into stupefaction. Though you prevent the best of them from serving Russia, you are employing the worst to serve you. You have engaged Jewish outcasts as spies and provocateurs. You have chosen as your agents the Azeffs and the Bogrovs, the assassins of your uncle, the Grand Duke Sergius, of Von Plehve and of the late Premier Stolypin.

"Your advisers have misled you and you are now drifting to your ruin, and plunging Russia into anarchy. You have become known as the 'Pardoning Czar,' but you have limited your pardons to those who have participated in the massacres of the Jews. You are now striking a new blow at the Jews of your Empire by depriving them of the last opportunity to secure an education, and are attempting to carry out the diabolical plans of your reactionary advisers. Your laws are being so cunningly administered that the Jewish prostitute enjoys extensive rights, while the Jewish student girl has none. The yellow passport of prostitution gives a Jewish girl the right to live in your capital. The Jewish girl with the highest aspirations who seeks an education in St. Petersburg is driven out by the police.

"And now, to add the crown of infamy, your Minister of Justice has staged a 'ritual murder' case. Russia is here moving backward. Your own great-grandfather, Alexander I, by an official decree prohibited ritual murder accusations against the Jews. But that was a hundred years ago. Papal bulls have been issued against them. The entire civilized world has declared their falsity. The Pogrom policy can no longer be pursued effectively. The civilized nations have but recently protested against it in thunder-tones. Hence your advisers have revived an ancient and exploded falsehood to discredit the Jews, to stir the passions of the unthinking mob against them.

"A Christian boy was murdered in Kiev. A Jew, Mendel Beilis, was found in the neighborhood and arrested, and has been imprisoned now for more than two years, awaiting trial. He is charged with having killed the boy to secure his blood for ritual purposes. For more than two years the manufacture of the most absurd evidence against him has been in progress. The head of the Kiev Detective Bureau, M. Mistchuk, who reported that he could find no incriminating evidence and that he was convinced it was not a case of ritual murder, has been cast into prison for weak-

ening the case of the Government against the Jew. All sorts of difficulties are being placed in the way of the defense. Beilis is denied the privilege of calling witnesses. It seems as though Russia is determined to strike at all the Jews through this infamous proceeding. She has closed her ears to the verdict of science. The impressive protest of the International Medical Congress, which has just concluded its session in London, passes unobserved.

"This is not the letter of one who hates Russia, but of one who admires the Russia that has produced a great literature, that has given birth to great men and women, that is struggling for emancipation, that possesses marvelous possibilities in her industries and natural resources. It is the expression of one who, though he loves the land, shudders at these manifestations of medieval bigotry and cruelty for which you are responsible in the eyes of the world and before God's throne.

"How can you, the man who suggested the establishment of universal peace at The Hague, tolerate, in the land in which you hold absolute sway, such refinement of barbarity and brutality, and yet venture to face the rulers of civilized powers as their equal? How can you permit the revival of long-exploded myths and superstitions? How, in short, do you expect to meet your Maker with such a burden upon your soul? Drive from your land the dark spirits of intolerance and despotism which have made of it a charnel-house and a prison! Then a new light will dawn upon your vast domain and you can yet bring to its millions happiness and prosperity."

HERMAN BERNSTEIN.

INTRODUCTION TO THE YIDDISH EDITION

By DR. ARNOLD D. MARGOLIN

Immediately after the events of the Beilis trial, a stenographic account of the entire proceedings was published. Although it contained quite a few inaccuracies and incidental errors, it reflects quite adequately the atmosphere that prevailed during the days of that historic trial. As one reads the complete evidence, one can have no doubt that the indictment against Beilis was drawn up out of pure air. The charge was not against Mendel Beilis, the prisoner, but against the entire Jewish people. Mendel Beilis was of unimportance as compared to the fullest import of the trial and the charges that the prosecution attempted to prove. The mere fact that Beilis had to stand trial for the charges drawn up against him constitutes one of the most reprehensible, vile chapters in the history of that anti-Semitic Russian organization, "The Black Hundred." The Beilis trial was an attempt on the part of the latter to besmirch the name of the Jewish people, in their efforts to prove the charges of ritual murder.

The stenographic report of the Beilis trial is one of the most remarkable documents as *a study of human treachery and baseness*, and a stirring account of the brave fight which was conducted against the reactionary, Imperial Russian Government by Beilis' counsellors.

A great part, if not the most significant part of that which has been come to be known as the "Beilis trial" occurred outside the court-room. And that part is as yet comparatively unknown to the greatest majority of Jews

and non-Jews. It was only after the overthrow of the Czar's government that it was at all possible to tell the entire truth about the Beilis trial, without fear of possible consequences from "The Black Hundred" organization. I tried in some measure to reveal the heroic part that was played in the Beilis trial by those Russians who virtually offered their lives to the Jewish people by daring to defend Beilis in the court-room, in a volume which was recently published by Thomas Seltzer, "The Jews of Eastern Europe." It would be desirable that all participants of the Beilis trial make public all the facts known to them but not yet published.

The following pages of Mendel Beilis' memoirs are extraordinarily interesting as *a record of human experience*. How much did this innocent martyr, who became the scapegoat for an entire people, suffer? What thoughts passed through his mind as he spent those years in prison, knowing that the charges against him were excruciatingly absurd, knowing that if he were proved guilty every Jew in Russia would suffer therefrom? How did he regard the investigations to which he was subjected, the long trial he had to endure?

* * *

It was my fortune to be Mendel Beilis' first counsellor, at the request of his wife and brother. Due to the Russian law, however, which prohibited a lawyer from seeing his client until the indictment has been drawn up against the latter, I did not see Beilis until February, 1912. My first impression of Beilis was that he was straight-forward, frank, unevasive, one who patiently carried his crown of thorns. He understood thoroughly that he was but a scapegoat, a substitute for the Jewish people. He never complained of his fate in my presence, however.

It was not my privilege to remain Beilis's official attorney for any length of time. During the summer of 1912 the Russian authorities managed things so that I had

to give evidence at the trial, and in accordance with the Russian law, lost the opportunity to defend Beilis before the jury.

Beilis' Memoirs should be in every Jewish home. Regardless of the fact that Beilis has omitted several matters, regardless of the fact that he has remained uninformed even to the present day as to certain incidents which occurred while he was incarcerated, and that he has not written his memoirs in chronological order, the value of Beilis reminiscences rests in their very reliance on memory rather than on notes. It is important in this particular case that we have Beilis' impressions rather than his exact transcription of the facts.

During the time of the trial, which took place in the heyday of Russian reaction, there was no time to be given for a hearing of Beilis. It was of utmost importance to prove false the charge of ritual murder against the Jews; and to that end all evidence was mustered to show the falsity of the charge. That purpose was nobly consummated by Beilis' counsellors and the special experts summoned. It was also important to discover the real murderers of the boy, Andrey Yustchinsky.

This task has been performed by the participants of the so-called private investigation. Their successful work has been done under the most difficult conditions and persecutions.

But now the time has come to remind ourselves of Beilis, and the role he was forced to play. We cannot forget that person who was chosen to represent the entire Jewish people, the person through whom the Black Hundreds of Kiev hoped to revenge themselves against the Jews.

It is the purpose of this volume to keep forever fresh the memory of one who was one of the foremost martyrs of our people.

CHAPTER I

WORK AND PEACE

When Czar Nicholas ascended the throne of the Great Russias, it was a time of much hope for the Jews. Stories had been afloat that he had even quarreled with his father, Alexander III because of his friendliness toward the Jews. There was even a rumor that Nicholas intended marrying a Jewish girl. Relief and sympathy was the least that the Jews saw visions of. Here would be a ruler of justice and clemency.

But history gave the lie to these hopes. What actual happiness the Jews found under his reign is known only too well to the world. It fell to my lot, however, to feel, more than any one else, the weight of his sovereign arm. Why I should have been particularly selected for my role is one of the secrets of Providence.

It was about a year after I had returned from my period of military service, that I married and settled down in Mezhygorye, a town about eight miles from Kiev. I secured work at a brick-kiln which belonged to my wife's uncle, and lived a quiet and uneventful existence. Some time later I received a letter from a cousin of mine, in which he offered me the superintendentship of a brick-kiln about to be erected. The well-known sugar-king Zaitzeff had a hospital for the poor in Kiev, of which my cousin was superintendent. In order to establish a perpetual endowment for the hospital, Zaitzeff decided to build a brick-kiln, the dividends of which would maintain the hospital. My

cousin himself, being entirely unacquainted with brick manufacturing, thought of me.

Kiev meant only better opportunities for me, and I therefore accepted the position.

The factory, of which I was now the overseer, was situated on the border-line of two city districts (outchastki), the Plossky and the Lukianovsky. The Jews had the right to reside in the Plossky district. Zaitzeff's Hospital, and my cousin's residence were located within that boundary. The factory itself was "outside the pale", and Jews were forbidden to live there. It was due only to Zaitzeff's influence that I was permitted to live on "sacred" territory. Since he was a merchant of what was known as the "first guild", the Russian law permitted him to have a Jewish employee. In the population of ten thousand that lived in the vicinity of the factory I was the only Jew. I found no difficulty, however, even though there were about five hundred non-Jews employed within the factory.

My personal contacts with the Russians in the locality were very limited. My work was restricted to the office, where I superintended the selling and the shipping. I never experienced any unpleasantness with the Russians of the neighborhood, with the exception of an incident that occurred in 1905, during the Revolution, when the torrent of pogroms swept over every Jewish city and town. When I was endangered, the local Russian priest came to my rescue; he commanded that I be guarded because I was the only Jew in the district: this as a reward for a favor that I had once rendered the priest.

It had been decided to build a school for a local orphan asylum, of which the priest was a director. He came to me and requested that I sell him the bricks at

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cheaper rates. I took the matter up with Zaitzeff, and finally secured the bricks at a very low rate.

There was another thing for which the priest felt indebted to me. Some distance away from our factory was one owned by a Russian, Shevtchenko. To ride to the district cemetery, one had to pass through the grounds of both factories. When I first came to the town, the priest asked me for permission to allow the various funeral processions to trespass on the factory grounds. I consented. When Shevtchenko was asked for the same, he refused. The priest often used to hold it up before the Russians:

“You see: the Christian did not give the permission, and the Jew did”.

And thus I lived about fifteen years on the factory. I was profiting by the privileges to be obtained in a large city. One of my boys was attending a governmental “gymnasium” in Kiev; the younger ones were going to a religious school (cheder). It was quite a distance from the factory to the city, it is true. But what more could one ask? I thanked the Lord for what I had, and was satisfied with my secure and respectable position.

Everything pointed to a peaceful future. It seemed that I had the right to expect to end my days in contentment. Who could have known, however, that the “demon of destruction” was dancing behind me, jeering at all my hopes and plans?

Then came 1911, and plunged me into a swirl of misfortune — misfortune which I shall never forget — and which broke my life for all time.

CHAPTER II

THE MURDER OF THE BOY YUSTCHINSKY

Though fourteen years have passed, the old scenes stand out with remarkable vividness, as if they had been etched on my brain. It was on the 20th of March. Everything was as usual. The dawn had not yet broken when I got up and went to the office.

The window which I faced while at my desk overlooked the street. As I looked through the window on that cold, dark morning, I saw people hurrying somewhere, all in one direction. It was the usual thing to see individual workers coming to the factory, at that time, or occasional passers-by. But now there were people in large groups, walking rapidly, coming from various streets. I went out to find the cause of the commotion, and was told by one of the crowd that a body of a murdered child had been found in the vicinity.

In a few hours the papers carried the news that on the Lukianovsky, within a half mile of the factory, the body of a murdered Russian boy, Andriusha Yustchinsky, had been found. The body had first been discovered in a cave, where the murdered boy, covered with wounds, had apparently been deposited.

That evening, one of my Russian neighbors, a member of the "Black Hundreds", came to visit me. He remarked that "it says in his paper" (the newspaper of his organization) that the murder of Yustchinsky was not of the

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usual kind; that the child had been murdered by Jews for purposes of "ritual". The newspaper, which went by the name of the organization, was a "patriotic" one; it was devoted to the "saving of Russia from the Jews".

The ordinary Russians, however, those who were not concerned with great plans for the salvation of Russia, were saying that the murder had been committed by a certain Vera Tchebiriak and by Yustchinsky's mother.

Suspicion had at once attached to Yustchinsky's mother because she had not betrayed any anxiety when her boy had first disappeared, or since. Yustchinsky disappeared on the 12th and was found on the 20th. How could one explain the fact that his mother had not at once notified the police, nor shown any apparent interest in his finding, nor evidenced any grief? The neighbors were not slow to comment on these facts. As time went on, further suspicions were awakened.

Andriusha Yustchinsky's father who had been killed in the Russo-Japanese war had left his son five hundred rubles, which the bank held in trust for the boy, and which he could not get until he became of age. In the meanwhile, Andriusha's mother had found a fiance for herself, who was dissatisfied with the prospect of not receiving any of the five hundred rubles. These and other facts caused people to suspect Yustchinsky's mother of complicity in the murder.

The Tchebiriak woman was suspected on other grounds. It was known that her own boy, Zhenia, and Andriusha who were schoolmates of the same age—thirteen years—would often stay over night at the Tchebiriak house. The police had another ground for suspicion. Hundreds of people came to see Yustchinsky's body and none of them recognized him; the boy's face was swollen out of recog-

ANDRIUSHA YUSTCHINSKY'S ASSASSINS



VERA TCHEBIRIAK



M. LATISHEFF
One of Tchebiriak's Gang



RUDZINSKY
One of Tchebiriak's Gang



PETER SINGAEVSKY
Brother of Tchebiriak

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dition. Vera Tchebiriak recognized him at once, which fact aroused suspicion.

At the time of the boy's burial, three days after his discovery, handbills were already being circulated, calling upon Christians to exterminate the Jews charging the Jews with having slain Yustchinsky "for the Jewish Passover". Vengeance was to be taken for the boy's blood.

This was the first attempt to direct the attention away from the real culprits, and to start the religious pot boiling in order to divert correct suspicions.

Vera Tchebiriak was well known around Lukianovsky. Her husband who was a clerk at the telegraph-office was seldom at home, even at night. She was known to have dealings with a gang of thieves, who were not ordinary breakers of the law, however. They used to dress royally; some even appearing in officers' uniforms. In this gang were her brother, Singayevsky, and two other friends, Latisheff and Rudzinsky. They would do the stealing and she would sell the loot. The neighbors were fully aware of her nefarious activities, but no one dared to interfere.

Tchebiriak lived in a house belonging to a Russian by the name of Zakhartchenko, who lived close to our factory, and who was himself a member of the "Black Hundreds". Zakhartchenko often used to confide in me how happy he would be to get rid of Tchebiriak. He was afraid, however, to start trouble. He told me several times, after the murder, that he felt certain that it had taken place in Tchebiriak's house, in that den of crime.

Three days after Vera Tchebiriak's arrest, the Moscow police arrested three suspicious young men, and as they were found to be residents of Kiev, they were sent to that city. Upon examination it was found that they had left

Kiev on March the 12th, that is, on the day of Yustchinsky's disappearance, and that on the same day they had been in Vera's house, where they had spent some time. As a matter of fact, these were actually the three leaders of her gang.

When the policemen of Lukianovsky were brought down to identify the apprehended trio, the police were terribly frightened. For in the arrested men they recognized the gentlemen whom they had often seen parading in officers' uniform, and to whom they had so often extended the officers' salute, believing them to be genuine officers. The police had known that these gentlemen used to visit Tchebiriak's house, but they had never doubted their honesty.

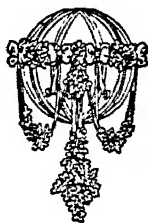
Upon the arrest of these three, the "Double-Headed Eagle", the powerful combine of "Black Hundreds" organizations, came out with loud indignation. "What a public scandal! Is it possible that the Jews who have murdered Yustchinsky should be allowed scot-free, while such innocent persons are to be imprisoned. Let the child be taken out of its grave; and let the world see how the body has been stabbed by the Jews".

The uproar of the "Black Hundreds" had its effect. The boy's body was disinterred, and the notorious Professor Sikorsky declared that it was no usual murder; that it had been committed for "religious purposes", which, "could be seen" from the stabs, and their number, "thirteen".

In the beginning, it all seemed ludicrous. Every one was certain that the crime had been the work of Tchebiriak's gang, and there were sufficient proofs for that, and here were people who came with fantastic tales of

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“thirteen stabs” and “religious purposes”. However, it proved to be no joke. The “Black Hundreds” worked out a devilish plan against the Jews, and since the pogromists had powerful influence at the time, they proceeded energetically to realize their plan.



CHAPTER III

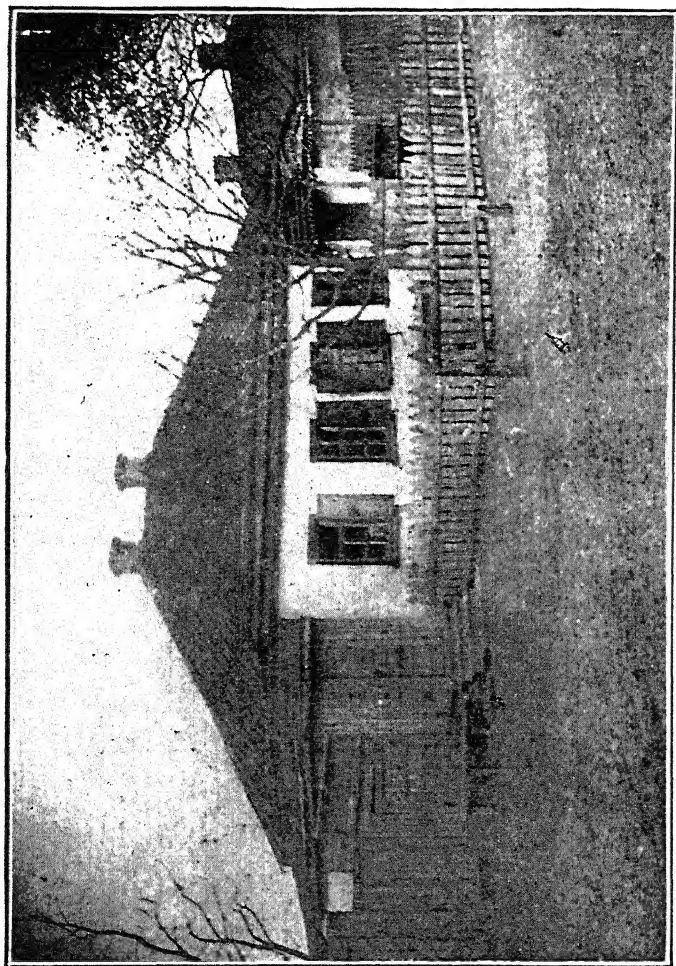
MY ARREST

The case was taken over by the Investigating Attorney, Fenenko. He began to visit our neighborhood frequently. He would measure the distances from the cave where Yustchinsky's body had been found; to the factory, to Tchebiriak's house. He investigated in this manner for several months. The pogromists' newspapers continued at their work of whitewashing the gang of thieves and throwing accusations at the Jewish people.

Of a sudden, Russian detectives began to visit our factory. They asked my children whether they had known the Yustchinsky boy, and whether they used to play with him. One of the detectives occupied the house opposite ours, and watched wherever I went and whatever I did. I was informed that the detectives, seeing that "it did not go well", began to treat the Russian children to sweets in order to make the children say that Andriusha used to visit us, and that my children played with him.

After a while, one of the detectives, Polishtchuk, began to visit me rather frequently. He once told me that there was a "feeling" that the crime had been committed on the factory premises, and furthermore that it must have been my work. On the morning following Polishtchuk's explanation, a squad of about ten persons appeared at the factory in company with Fenenko, the Investigating Attor-

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Beilis' Residence Prior to His Arrest

ney. Fenenko appeared in the best of moods, when he began asking me:

"You are the manager of this factory?"

"Yes".

"Since when"?

"For about fifteen years".

"Are there any other Jews, here, besides you?"

"No. I am here alone".

"You are a Jew, are you not? Where do you go to pray? Is there a synagogue here"?

"I am a Jew. There is no synagogue here; one can pray at home as well".

"Do you observe the Sabbath"?

"The factory is kept running on Saturdays, so that I cannot leave the place".

Suddenly he asked me:

"Have you a cow? Do you sell milk"?

"I have a cow", was my answer. "But I do not sell milk; we need all of it for the house".

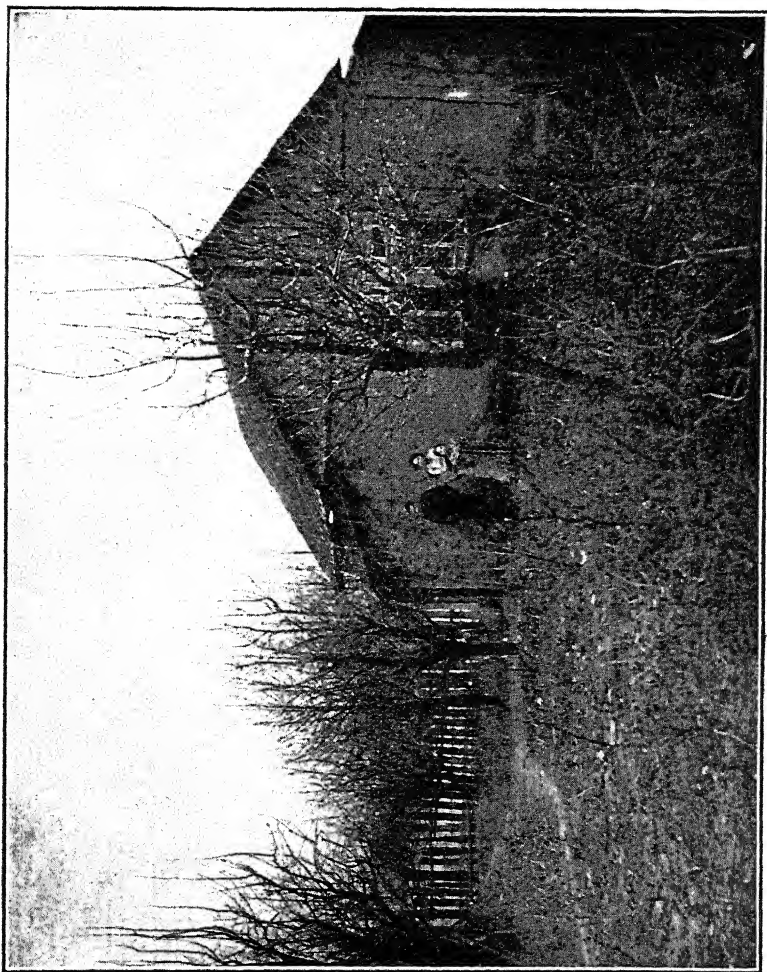
"And when a good friend of yours, let us say, comes to you, do you sell him a glass of milk"?

"When a good friend of mine comes to me, I give him food and drink, milk also, but I never sell it".

I simply could not understand the necessity of these questions about my piety and as to whether I went to synagogue. Had the authorities become so pious that they could not tolerate my praying without the official ten (minyan) required by the Jewish law? And what was the purpose of all those questions about the cow and the milk?

Fenenko and his confreres seemed quite satisfied and bid me a cordial good-bye. As they were leaving, I noticed

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The House of Vera Tchebiriak

that one of them photographed me. Evidently, they were quite earnest about their work.

This incident occurred on Thursday, the 21st of July, 1911, on the "9th of Ab", the day of fasting for the Jews, when they bewail their great misfortune, the destruction of the Temple, and their exile from the Homeland, from Zion, from which time all their sufferings in the Exile date.

It was dawn of Friday, July the 22nd, when everybody was still fast asleep, when I heard a great commotion, as if caused by a great many horsemen. Before I had a chance to look out, I heard a loud banging on the door. I was naturally quite alarmed. What could have happened at this time of morning? In all the fifteen years that I had lived at the factory, I had never heard such noise. In the meantime, the knocking grew louder.

My first thought was that a fire had broken out at the factory. I rushed to the window; and although it was quite dark, I could recognize the well-known uniforms of the gendarmes. What could the gendarmes be doing here at night? Why all that knocking at the door? Everything turned dark before my eyes; my head swam; I nearly swooned with fright. The ceaseless knocking, however, made me realize that now was not the time for reflection, and I rushed to open the door.

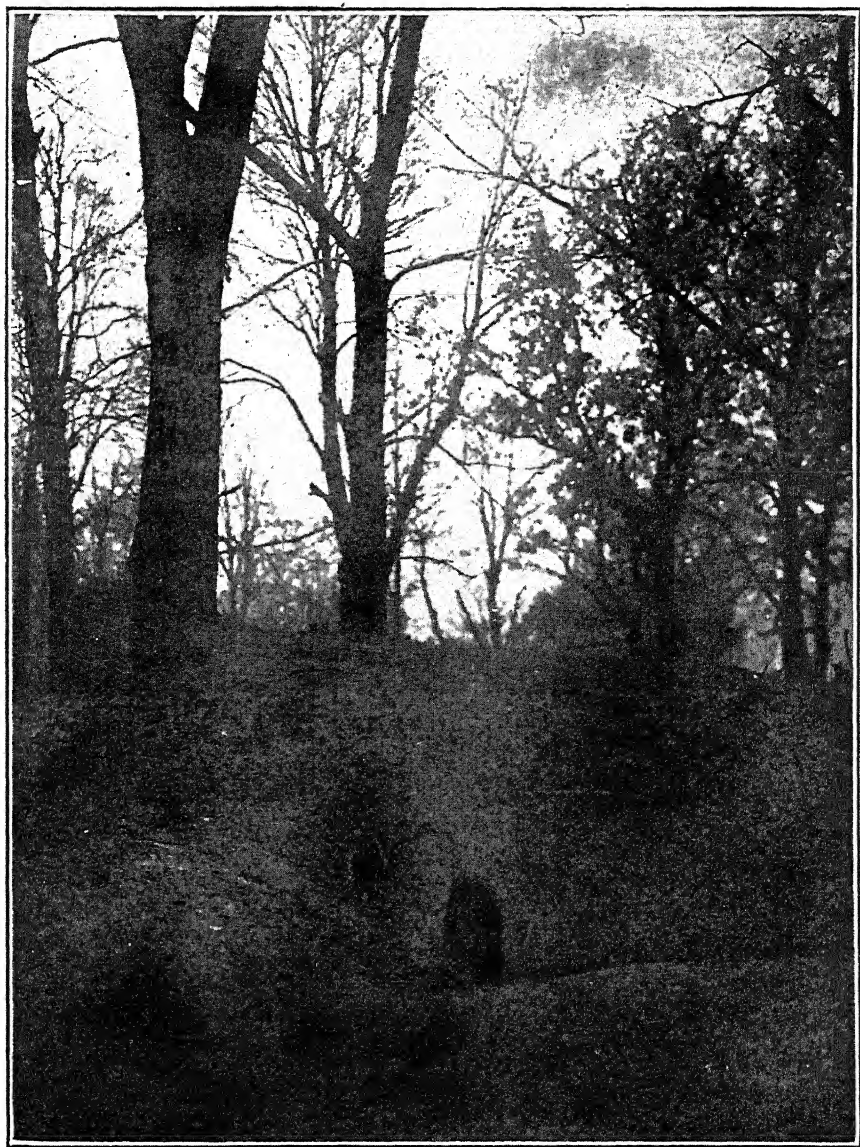
In swarmed a large squad of gendarmes with Colonel Kuliabko, the notorious chief of the "Okhrana" (secret political police) at their head. After placing a guard at the door, Colonel Kuliabko approached me closely, and asked with severity:

"Are you Beilis?"

"Yes".

"In the name of His Majesty, you are arrested. Get dressed", thundered his diabolical voice.

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The Cave in Which the Murdered Child Was Found

In the meantime, my wife and children awoke, and a general wail began. The children were frightened by the glittering uniforms and swords and were pulling with all their might for me to protect them. The poor things did not know that their father was helpless himself, and needed protection and help from others.

I was taken from my family. None was permitted to come near me. I was not allowed to say a word to my wife. In silence, restraining my tears, I dressed myself, and—without being allowed to reassure my children or to kiss them goodbye—I was taken away by the police.

The Colonel remained in my home to search, while I was taken to the "Okhrana". On the street, we met many of the workers going toward our factory. I felt ashamed and asked the police to walk with me on the side-walk instead of on the street, as was the custom when police escorted arrested persons. They refused to grant me that favor, however.

I was later informed that precisely at the time of my arrest Vera Tchebiriak's gang of thieves, including herself and Madam Yustchinsky were released from prison as innocent and wrongly suspected persons.



THE STORY OF MY SUFFERINGS

CHAPTER IV

AT THE "OKHRANA"

It was still quiet in the "Okhrana" when we arrived there. The Russian officials did not care, as a rule, to get up too early. The desk sergeant was busy with his books, and was issuing orders to some clerks and spies. The latter looked at me with cunning and piercing eyes.

I had never imagined, in the course of my peaceful work, that I should ever be arrested and have to sit in the "Okhrana" watched by a "gorodovoy", who would not take his eyes from me for a second. But as the saying is "There is no insurance against prison and death".

I sat there in a fever: hot and cold at the same time. I had a fierce headache. Presently I heard the stamping of horses' hooves, and later the tinkling of spurs in the hall. The door opened, and the gendarmes who had remained in my house for the search entered. Seeing that the gendarmes were along, I felt more assured. Then tea was brought in. I was asked whether I should like something to eat, but I thanked them for their courtesy. I could not touch the tea, though my tongue was dry as hot sand. I was thinking all the time: "What is coming next? Why am I arrested?"

Finally, Kuliabko came in. He handed me a large sheet of paper, a questionnaire. I was to answer the following questions:

Who are you?

Whence do you come?

Who is your father?

What is your religion?

Do you have any relatives?

And finally there was the question:

What do you know of Yustchinsky's murder?

Kuliabko left the room, telling me: "When you have filled out the questions, ring the bell, and I shall come back".

When I noticed the last question, I felt "the knife at my throat". I at last understood what had happened. I tried to find consolation in the form of the question: "What did I know about the murder". If so, I was no more than a witness.

I answered all the questions. As for the murder, I stated that I knew nothing, except what people in the street were talking about it. Who had perpetrated it, and the purpose, I did not know. I rang the bell. Kuliabko entered, looked over my replies, and said:

"Is that all? Nonsense. If you do not tell me the truth, I'll send you up to the Petropavlovsky fortress (well known political prison in Petrograd)".

He banged the door furiously and left the room.

About four in the afternoon I heard the weeping of a child; it sounded like my own. I finally recognized the voice of one of my children. Out of sheer horror, I began to knock my head against the wall. I knew that my boy was very timid and nervous, being especially afraid of the police. I actually feared he might die under their hands.

While he was crying, the door opened, and Kuliabko re-entered the room.

"See, your boy is also telling lies. . . ."

"What lies?", I asked.

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"Zhenia, come in!" He brought in Tchebiriak's boy, and turning towards me, snapped:

"Zhenia says that your boy used to play with Andriusha, and your boy denies it".

Thereupon the Colonel led the boy out of the room. A few minutes later, I heard foot-steps in the hall. I looked through the grating and saw the "gorodovoy" leading my boy, eight years old. I felt a violent tug at my heart, as I saw the "gorodovoy" lock my boy in one of the cells. I expected to be held for a few hours, to be interrogated and finally released. I was innocent, and they were bound to see that a mistake had occurred. Meanwhile all my thoughts were preoccupied with my child. Why had they brought him into this hell?

In the evening a Russian woman came in and said:

"Your child is here, but have no fear. I am looking after him. Please don't worry. I am a mother myself; I understand your suffering and sympathize with you. Have no fears; God saves the honest men".

As night came on, I remembered that this was the first Friday night in all my life that the evening was spoiled. I thought of my usual Friday nights with the candles on the table, with the children dressed in their Sabbath best, and everybody so warm and friendly. And now? The house in disorder. My wife alone at the cheerless table. No light, no joy. And all of them weeping their eyes out. I almost forgot my own troubles, thinking of my unfortunate boy imprisoned and my mourning family. I rang the bell, and Kuliabko came in.

"Listen", I said to him; "I do not care what happens to me. The truth will out and I shall be liberated, but why keep my child a prisoner. You are yourself a father.

My child may fall ill here, and it will be on your conscience. Can't you release my boy?"

He smiled at me.

"Tell me the truth".

"What do you want: truth or falsehood? Even if you would insist I could tell no lies. I am innocent".

"Nonsense, nonsense", he motioned with his hand. "I shall send you to jail, and then you will change your talk".

He went out with the usual banging of the door, and I remained alone. All along I expected: another minute, just one minute, and I shall be freed. But when I heard the clock strike midnight, I realized that I was expected to spend the night in the place. I could not sleep. From time to time I heard the coughing of my boy, and it made my very brain reel.

Saturday morning, the Russian woman came in again and told me that she had slept in the same room with my child.

About noon, I heard somebody asking my boy:

"Will you be able to get home by yourself, or shall I send a man to take you home?"

An hour later, a "gorodovoy" came into my room and told me with a smile that he had brought the boy to the street-car, but the boy refused to board it, and ran home on foot. With the boy freed, I felt happier.

On Sunday I again heard children's voices. Those were my children; they must have been brought to the "Okhrana" for questioning. I was given permission to go out into the hall for a minute to see the children and to greet them. In a moment we were separated again.

Eight long days I was kept in the "Okhrana". None of the officials came to see me. This increased my anxiety. I hoped for the best, but expected the worst. If they

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ask me nothing, it looks as though this will continue without end. Why? Why? In the evening of August 3rd, a "gorodovoy" entered my room and told me to get ready to go to the Investigating Attorney. This cheered me up. At last! Whatever happens, at least I'll find out just how things stand. I dressed quickly and two "gorodovoy's" escorted me to the Attorney.

During the short time I had spent in prison, I had almost forgotten what the streets looked like. I looked at the carefree passers-by and enjoyed the freedom and light as though I had never experienced them before. I was considerably weakened by my enforced seclusion, and found it rather hard to walk. I asked my guard to use the street-car.

"You are an arrested person, and you cannot travel with other people", was the abrupt decision of one of the "gorodovoy's".

Some of the passers-by recognized me, and was pointed at by others.



CHAPTER V

THE INQUISITION

Exhausted by all the unwarranted insults to which I was submitted at the "Okhrana", and weakened by the long march through the city under the escort of the policemen, I could hardly reach the district court. Upon our arrival, I was brought into a large hall in which there were Fenenko, the Attorney, Karbovsky, the District Attorney and the latter's assistant Loshkareff.

They looked at each other significantly, as though the outcome of the meeting was a foregone conclusion. I felt rather heavy at heart especially when I remembered the questions put to me at the house by Fenenko. There was a mocking tone to them.

Ordinarily, the police who bring an arrested person to the "sliedovatel" (Investigating Attorney) are supposed to remain on guard during the interrogation. They are not permitted to let the prisoner out of their sight. Here I saw something new: my guards were told to leave the hall. This increased my apprehension. It seemed as though the crafty officials were up to some trick. But I had no alternative. Hope and despair alternated in rapid succession. The former was inspired by the knowledge of my innocence; the latter was born of my acquaintance with Russian officialdom. Soon Fenenko turned to me.

"Did you know Andriusha Yustchinsky?"

"No", I replied unhesitatingly. "I work in the office

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of a large factory; and my daily relations are with merchants, adults and not with young children, especially children of the streets. I might possibly have seen him at one time, but one meets quite a few people on the street. I am certain that I could not have distinguished him from any other boy”.

The District Attorney, Karbovsky who had been leaning back on his chair, watching me intently, suddenly bent over the table and asked me:

“They say there are people among you Jews who are called “tzadikim” (pious men). When one wishes to do harm to another man, you go to the “Tzadik” and give him a “pidion” (fee), and the “tzadik” uses the power of his word which is sufficient to bring misfortune upon other men”.

The Hebrew words that he was using, “Tzadik”, “pidion” and the like were written down in his notebook and each time he wanted to use the word he would consult his notebook. I answered:

“I am sorry but I know nothing about “tzadikim”, “pidionoth” or any other of these things. I am a man entirely devoted to my business, and I don’t understand what you want of me”.

“And what are you”, he asked, as he again consulted his notes. “Are you a “chassid” or a “misnagid”?

“I am a Jew”, I answered, “and have no idea of the distinction between a “chassid” and a “misnagid”.

“What do you Jews call an “aphikomom”?

“To these I have but the same answer”.

I began to regard these men as somewhat unbalanced. What could they possibly want? What had Yustchinsky’s murder to do with the “aphikomom”? And furthermore, how did the difference between “chassidim” and “misnag-

dim" concern them. I could only imagine that they were poking fun at me, and some of the Hebrew ritual.

But unfortunately it was no matter of jest. On the surface they were sincere. In their heart, perhaps, was the deep conviction that Vera Tchebiriak had murdered the boy. Perhaps these questions were directed at me under orders from the powers above.

After the questioning, Fenenko ordered the gorodovoy's to escort me back to the "Okhrana". Although my hopes were again dashed, I believed that their mistake would soon be apparent to them and they would soon send me home.

When we reached the "Okhrana", I was led into a room where I found three "political" prisoners, two Jews and one Russian. At that period the "Okhrana" was particularly busy, for Czar Nicholas was about to come to Kiev, and it was necessary to rid the city of all "disloyal" elements. When my fellow-prisoners discovered who I was they began encouraging me, and telling me that I would soon be released, and not to lose hope. Fate seemed against me, however. I felt more helpless than ever. What could I, a helpless, friendless man, do against an organized, autocratic bureaucracy. This was not the first time that the government through some of its agents was attempting to instigate pogroms. I would become reassured as I realized that they had no vestige of proof against me.

A few days later I was again summoned to the *slidovatel*. These questionings would invariably excite me. On the one hand I felt encouraged, for if they desired to question me it was a sign that they wanted to know the truth. On the other hand, I would become frightened of the wild questions they were in the habit of putting, questions designed to confuse and entangle me, and which had

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no sense or relevancy in themselves. My fears were heightened when I was told by some of my fellow-prisoners that the whole case smelled of "politics", that its chief purpose was to harm the Jews, to incite pogroms. The Minister of Justice, himself, it seems, was interested in creating a "Jewish case", and was extending the protection of the government to the real criminals. For some strange reason I feared Fenenko most, although I discovered later that he was the least hostile toward me.

When brought to the District Court, I found Fenenko alone. Again he dismissed my guard. After being absorbed in thought for a while, he turned toward me abruptly:

"Beilis, you must understand that it is not I who am accusing you; it is the District Attorney. It is he who has ordered your imprisonment".

"Will I be sent to jail? Will I have to wear prison clothes"?

"I do not know what is to happen to you. I only want you to know that the orders are the District Attorney's and not mine".

This message was anything but cheering to me. I was thrown into a cold fever. All was lost. I was to be sent to prison. My terror at the prospect forced me to speak.

"But may I remind you of something? This is the first time in my life that I have had to deal with an official of your rank, but I know that it is the duty of an Investigating Attorney to determine the truth, to investigate it. When the Investigating Attorney collects all the possible evidence, he makes out an indictment and turns it over to the District Attorney; and if the evidence is against the suspected person the latter is imprisoned. If there is insufficient evidence, the man is set free.

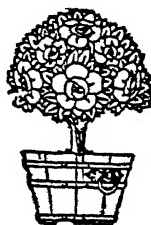
"If you send me to prison now, I take it that you have

found something against me. What have I done? For what crime have I been indicted”?

“Ask me no questions”, was all that Fenenko could answer. “I have told you enough. It is the District Attorney and not I”.

I could tell from Fenenko's manner of speaking that there was something ulterior behind the whole incident. The whole insidious plot was laid bare. I was not given much time to reflect upon the matter, for the gorodovoy was called in and I was taken back to the “Okhrana”, together with the sealed indictment.

Very shortly afterward I was called to be transferred to the jail. After my petition to spend the night, at least, with the Jews whose acquaintance I had made in the prison, the officials granted my request.



THE STORY OF MY SUFFERINGS

CHAPTER VI

J A I L

The guard who accompanied me to the prison permitted me to take the tram-car, but we did not go inside where the passengers were; we stood on the platform. While riding to jail, I met some of Zaitzeff's employees going to work, and a few of my acquaintances. That was all I needed to complete the picture of darkness.

During our ride, a Russian boarded the car, and upon noticing me embraced and kissed me. It was Zakhartchenko, the owner of the house where the Tchebiriaks lived.

"Brother", he said, "don't lose spirit. I myself am a member of the 'Doubleheaded Eagle', but I tell you that the stones of the bridge may crumble, but the truth will out".

With these words he jumped off the car. My guards let the man go unharmed because he was then wearing the badge of the "Double Eagle", whose owners are allowed to do pretty much as they like. The gorodovoy had been impressed by Zakhartchenko's speech, and treated me rather friendly. The bits of kindness shown me by many of the Russians before and during my imprisonment mitigated my bitterness towards my persecutors.

As the tramcar stopped at the last station before the jail, we walked on foot to prison. Passing by a fruit-market, the gorodovoy went to a stall, and bought some pears, and offered them to me. I could not restrain my

amazement. "I bought them for you", he said: "You are going to prison, and you won't get them there".

As soon as I entered the prison door, and the official called out my name: "Beilis", all the other officials came on the run to see me. Each poked some fun at me, and devoured me with their eyes. Then one got up the courage to come near me; he addressed me sarcastically. "Well, here we'll feed you Matzoth and blood to your heart's content. Go on, change your dress"!

I was led into a small room and was given the "royal garments", the drab prisoners' clothes. As I took off my boots, the blood rushed to my head, darkness swept over me, and I felt I was going to faint. A guard came over and took off my shoes. When I was put into the chair to have my hair cut, I was again about to faint. The same Russian came over and gave me some water.

About noon I was brought into my residence, where I found about forty prisoners. The door was locked. No way out of here. One had to hope, to hope, to steel oneself, to be as strong as the grating-bars in order to survive these foul and dark quarters. I surveyed my new home and my new friends. The walls were painted with tar. Hardly a ray of light came through the bars. The appalling smell of dirt and unwashed humanity was nauseating. The crowd of prisoners was jumping around, dancing, cutting crazy pranks. One was singing a song, the other telling smutty stories, some were wrestling and sparring. Was I condemned to this atmosphere for a lifetime, or was this part of a horrible dream?

"The Prosecuting Attorney has ordered it, not I": Fenenko's words came back to me. "It is not I that am accusing you".

I sat down in one of the remote corners, with head

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bent on the "khalat" (prisoner's greatcoat), reflecting on fate. While I was thus in deep thought, the door of the big cell was opened, and a drunken voice shouted: "Dinner".

When I had first come into the cell, I had noticed several pails on the floor, like those used in our bathhouses. When the call for dinner rang out, several prisoners rushed for the pails, of which there were four or five. There were about forty men in the room. There was no dispute about the pails, for ten people could easily eat from the same pail. But there were only three spoons. Who was to eat first? A free-for-all began at once. The fierce scuffle lasted for some time, and after some had been injured and most everybody was tired, the spoons fell into the hands of the strongest and quickest. Peace was declared and the men sat down on the floor to eat. Each had just so many spoonfuls and then passed the spoon to the next man. At times a man would cheat on the number of spoonfuls, and would take one or two extra spoonfuls. Another scuffle would begin with its accompaniment of the choicest and finest language to be found in the felons' dictionary.

I sat in my corner and looked with consternation upon this picture of life in prison. When the meal was over, tea was brought in, which looked more like water. Suddenly one of the company came over to my corner and offered me a lump of sugar. He did not speak but made signs; he was dumb apparently, and seemed to be a Jew. He drank his tea and then brought some for me in a small pitcher. Thus elapsed the first few hours in prison.

In the evening a new prisoner was brought into our quarters, a Jew. His arrival made things brighter, for now at least I had somebody to talk to. I approached him and announced who I was. He was greatly surprised

on hearing my name. Although he himself had troubles of his own, having been arrested for setting his house on fire to collect insurance, he forgot his own difficulties and concerned himself with mine. He was a person of some influence. His cousin was a builder-contractor in Kiev, and had good connections with the government. The prisoner was therefore allowed to get food from the outside into prison, which food he shared with me.

In the morning my friend fell ill, and was taken to the hospital. I may say that the room in which I was was not the usual prison quarters. It also belonged to the hospital, and one had to spend thirty days there before being taken into the "real jail". I was also informed that the pails from which we were eating were also used as wash-pails in the laundry.

The first two days I was not registered on the ration-list and received no bread. On the third day I was marked down as a regular boarder, and began getting my bread ration, which was the only thing I could bear to eat. I could not touch the soup because of the bath-pails. Once while we were having dinner, one of the men found a quarter of a mouse in the pail, which must have gotten there from the fine grits in the prison-stores. The man who found it exhibited it, not so much to protest against the prison administration, as to deprive the others of their appetite and get more for himself.

As the days passed, I found myself weakening. I had to begin eating. I could obtain food from home only on Sundays (visiting days). I waited for Sunday with greatest impatience. I was anxious to hear news of my family. I shall never forget the eagerness with which I looked forward to Sunday. On Saturday nights I was unable to sleep from impatience. My back and shoulders ached

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from lying down, for the floor served as a bed. I would rather have walked, but this was forbidden. I was lying as on a rake.

At last the day of happiness. On Sunday a package of food was brought in to me, which was supposed to last for the whole week. When my prison comrades saw the package they showed the greatest joy. They tore it out of my hands in an instant, and devoured its contents in no time. They tore at each other and at the package, each trying to get a larger share. As they tore at each other like dogs, I was reminded that I had to face another week of fasting. I was watched by the group, as to whether I showed any signs of displeasure. For being displeased with comrades meant a good beating. I had to put on a happy face, almost joy at their eating, and to say: "Eat heartily, boys".

That autumn was particularly cold. The window-panes were nearly all broken. At night it was freezingly cold. Things were not made any pleasanter by the wet and filthy floor and the vermin crawling all over the place. My body was all bitten and scratched. A month passed, and I was transferred to other quarters, where there were also about forty prisoners, most of them prison-guests of long standing. At this place I found three new companions, Jews, who made much over me upon hearing of my case.

It was on a Saturday that I was transferred to my new quarters. Sunday morning I was again impatient. When I received my package of food, the Jews advised me how to go about it so as not to be robbed. I was to give them the package, and they would look after it; the others feared them and would not interfere. I acted accordingly,

and we spent five days together eating and drinking. As their trial was to take place then, they were released.

As long as the Jews had been with me, the Russians had not approached me. No sooner did the Jews leave than the Russians became quite familiar and treated me rather respectfully. They knew of my case, and were amused by the questions that the investigation had put to me. They all predicted it would come to nothing. One of these men became specially friendly and was continuously showering me with compliments. In the beginning I could not understand his excessive kindness, for he did not seem to be a person of natural kindliness. It was only later that I found out his game. But the "finding out" cost me dearly.



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CHAPTER VII

THE BLOODY ANALYSIS

On the next Sunday I again received a food package. I was happy to see it — and, apparently, the other prisoners were no less pleased. One of them offered to take charge of it for “safe keeping”. But, recognizing him as one of those who could go through a package in the twinkling of an eye, I thanked him, but said that I felt I could take care of it myself.

A little later three new men were brought in — a Jew and two Russians. The Jew confided to me that he could not eat the food, and that he had no sugar for his tea. I offered him some “khala” and sugar which he accepted with many thanks.

“What are you here for”? he wanted to know.

I wished to avoid the usual condolences and sighings, so I told him I was there for horse stealing. I asked him with what he was charged. He told me that he had had five hundred roubles, with which he had paid for some purchase. They were found to be counterfeit, and he was arrested. He was, released soon after.

Once, on the “promenade”, one of the prisoners called to me: “Beilis”. The young Jew turned around in amazement.

“You are Beilis? Why didn’t you tell me at first? Why did you conceal your name? I am happy to be in the same cell with you. Do not grieve—God will help you”.

The time was approaching when the prisoners were to make an "analysis" on me. At first I didn't know what that meant in the thieves' lingo. But I soon found out.

When a group of prisoners is implicated in the same case, the necessity arises for agreeing on what they are all to say at the trial, so that they may not become confused. If there is a stranger in the cell he may overhear their consultations and inform on them. He is therefore subjected to an analysis—he gets a preliminary beating. If he doesn't report that, they feel safe, to speak freely in his presence.

I began to understand the reasons for their friendliness. It was assumed in order to be able to pick up a quarrel and perform the "analysis". It seemed, however, that not all were bent on the analysis. None wanted to be the provocateur, the bully. The one who was angry at my refusal to make him the guardian of my package, undertook the mission. He also "had it in" for the Jews, because it was a Jew who had accused him of theft. I knew that this particular prisoner was out "to get me". I was helpless.

It happened thus. I could not wear my own shoes and had to wear the prison sabots with nails in them. From constant walking around to distract my thoughts, my feet were sorely hurt by the nails, and were bleeding. Once having tired of walking I sat down on a chair. The peasant came on a run and asked me to let him sit down on the chair. Before I could answer, he hit me so that the blood started running. All were watching me to see how I would react. They were somewhat frightened seeing blood and brought me some water to wash it. When I refused to take the water one of them shouted:

"Stab him! Do away with him. You can see—he is going to squeal".

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The young Jew came over to me and begged me, "Be reasonable. Wash the blood off. You will be transferred to another room. I shall have to remain here and they'll take their vengeance on me. If you wash yourself they'll become amenable. You had better do it."

I did as I was asked. I had consideration for the young man and washed myself. Whereupon all the Russians turned upon the peasant and commenced to give him a beating. "Jews", they said, "must be tried out in another way".

In the morning I was on the "promenade". With me were the peasant who had hit me, and another Russian. The prison guard saw my swollen eye and asked me who had done it. Before I had time to answer, the Russian pointed at the peasant. The *nadsiratel* (guard) promptly grabbed hold of the peasant's collar and conducted us to the office. On the way to the prison-office we had to pass by several guards. Each of them questioned us and upon being told—gave a hearty blow to the peasant. The last guard we met, when informed of the culprit, got hold of the peasant and threw him down a flight of steps. I feared he would have his head broken.

In the office he was asked by one of the officials: "Why did you hit Beilis"? His answer was:

"I asked him as a comrade to let me sit on his chair. He did not let me so I hit him".

"Is he your comrade"? asked the official severely.

"Well, he takes our children and drinks their blood. Will he lord it over us here?"

"Have you yourself seen him kill children"? asked the official.

"No, but so I am told".

"Well then, take this and this"—and the official gave the peasant a good beating.

CHAPTER VIII

THE SPIES

I was transferred to another room, for it was impossible to remain with my peasant friend. In this room there were only twelve men, for the most part petty officials, policemen and such-like who had been guilty of minor offences. Among them was one Kozatchenko who treated me quite friendly. But they were all suspicious of me.

A few days later I was summoned into the hall by the warden who came to ask me whether I was being treated in my new quarters as badly as in the previous ones. When I told him it was better here, he left. In my new quarters I noticed that the guard would take letters from the prisoners to deliver them outside, and would bring replies, all for a few kopecks.

In the meantime I had no news of my family. Being friendly with Kozatchenko, I told him I should like to send a note to my family, I wrote a letter and took the precaution to leave no empty space so as not to let anybody else add to my words. In the letter I asked about the welfare of my wife and family and wanted to know the reason for their silence and inactivity. Why were they not doing something? I was innocent. Apparently no one took any interest in me. I wrote that I did not know if I could stand further imprisonment. I also mentioned that the bearer of the letter was to be paid fifty kopecks and to be given an answer.

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I gave my letter to the guard and he later brought me an answer. I read it and tore it carefully. A few days later he asked me whether I should like to send another letter. I told him I would not.

Kozatchenko's trial was to take place shortly. He came to me once and told me: "Listen to me, Beilis. The whole world knows you are innocent. When I am released I'll do what I can for you. I have enough information from the prisoners here who know who the real murderers are".

He went to his trial and was acquitted. He turned to prison for the night. In the morning when he was to leave I gave him a letter for my wife. I wrote her that the bearer would give her news of me.

This happened on Wednesday. On Friday evening I was summoned to the office. I had a pang of foreboding in my heart. In the office I was met by two officials, the inspector and another one. The inspector asked me:

"You wrote letters to your family"? —

At first I did not know what to say. All my suspicions fell upon Kozatchenko who had seemed suspicious from the start. I decided that he must have been the one who turned the letter over to the officials in order to get into their good graces. I did not suspect the guard of treachery. The less so in view of the fact that he had brought back a reply. "Therefore I didn't want to get him into trouble. I told the inspector: "I sent a letter with Kozatchenko". In reply he read me the two letters, including the one I had sent through the guard. It was clear that the whole thing was a trap set by the guard from the very beginning to get my letters, in order to deliver them to the officials. I was told to go back to prison.

About two hours later, on Friday night when all good

Jews were sitting down to cheerful tables and singing "zmiroth", the door of our room opened and I was told with severity: "Take your things and come with me".

I took my belongings and was brought into a small room—cold to the freezing point. I looked around: the room was empty. I implored the guard to give me at least a mattress. "Tomorrow", was his answer, "it does not matter. You will die overnight".

He locked the door.. I sat down on the cold and wet floor and trembled from cold. With unspeakable suffering I waited the coming of the morning. The thought of the letters would not leave my head. I feared that since the letters had fallen into the hands of the officials they might also have arrested my wife. In the morning I received a visit from the deputy-warden. I pleaded with him to do one of the two: either order the stove to be heated so that the room would be warm, or else have me shot and put an end to my tortures.

His answer was: "I cannot do anything myself. I'll ask for instructions. Wait an hour".

He returned in an hour and had me transferred to a small but warm room.

I waited for Sunday. Sunday came, no one arrived, and no package of food was received. I felt certain my poor family had also been arrested. Was it possible, however, that none was left free to take care of me. I heard children's voices from the prison yard and it seemed to me they were the voices of my children. I thought that they and my wife had been thrown into jail.

On Monday the warden himself appeared. I inquired: Why had not I received anything on Sunday? Was it because of the letters?

His answer was: "For the letters you got "strict con-

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finement". Such practices are forbidden. As to the package of food, it is not our fault: something must have happened at your home. I shall find out".

I took the opportunity to ask him to have another man put into my room; a decent person, for one might go mad from lonesomeness and solitude. He promised to grant my request and departed.

An hour later two young men were brought into my cell. Each had chains on both hand and feet. Both looked savage enough. They must have been murderers. I would have gladly foregone the pleasure of their company. I had to conceal my sentiments and to put up a pleasant face. It could not be helped.

Another few days passed. One morning I was given a letter from my wife. She wrote that she was not well, could not come herself and was therefore sending money. I felt cheered up thank God they were all home. But why am I imprisoned? What would they do with me? How long will my unjust, undeserved tortures last? When will there be an end to my misfortunes?

Those questions oppressed my brain. I was walking around day after day as one out of his senses. I kept thinking : is there no man to take up my cause? Is there nothing being done to get me freed?



CHAPTER IX

A TASTE OF PRISON LIFE

On a day in January 1912, I was summoned to the district court to get my indictment. My joy was boundless. Come what might, I was glad to know where I stood, to know for certain that I was condemned.

I was escorted to the district-court. I was dressed in a Russian red-brown sheepskin and had shoes without soles. In the court I found my wife and brother whom I had not seen for a long time. We could not talk to each other, however. In the morning before going to court I received a letter from my wife and brother telling me that I should announce in court that I had retained as my lawyers Messrs. Gruzenberg, Grigorovitch-Barsky and Margolin.

I was handed the indictment. When I realized its contents I was stunned. I was not charged overtly with "ritual murder". I was nevertheless accused of having murdered Yustchinsky or having been accomplice to his murder with others. I was charged in accordance with the statute dealing with premeditated murder, the death of the victim having been caused by bodily tortures inflicted upon it, or the victim having been subjected before murder to cruel torment. The statute called in case of conviction for 15-20 years "katorga", imprisonment with hard labor.

Of course, had the investigation been carried on along the lines of an ordinary criminal case, the indictment would

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have been only a sort of a personal "frame-up", a libel. Since, however, the investigation and the whole case in general had been undertaken with the intention of turning it into a "ritual" murder case,—the whole case became a "frame-up" on the Jewish people. I was amazed at Fenenko, He told me he was not indicting me, and yet he composed the indictment. As I was later informed he had intended at first to quash it, since there was no proof whatever against me. That is what he himself said—but the Prosecuting Attorney of the Kiev district court, together with the notorious Zamislovsky and the whole band of blackhundreds compelled Fenenko to formulate the indictment. It should be borne in mind that Fenenko did not even intend to arrest me. All that was done by the procurator Tchaplin-sky. Nevertheless, the "higher powers" were far from being satisfied with the indictment. Its premises were weak at their foundation. In addition to that the authorities actually wanted the case to have a ritual character. The procurator exercised all his efforts to have it inserted into the indictment that Yustchinsky had been murdered for "religious purposes". I was told that Fenenko had been summoned several times before the Minister of Justice in St. Petersburg. Fenenko, however, would not be budged and won his point.

Heart-broken, I was led back to my dark and dingy prison. About that time I began to feel my feet swelling—they were being covered with sores. Since my shoes had no soles, the walking on the snow and ice caused me intense suffering. Hence the swelling and sores. The pain was almost unbearable. The skin burst and blood was oozing through. I did not find much sympathy for my sufferings on the part of those around me.

One morning I asked the doctor to be brought in to

examine me. I was in agony. The officials were merciful enough and sent me a "feldscher" (surgeon's aide). The feldscher looked at the sores and said that I was to be transferred to the hospital. Later a guard came in and shouted — "hurry up, let us go", I could not move, however; my feet were so swollen that I could not stand up. He did not want to listen to any reason and kept shouting, "Move on".

One of the prisoners who happened to be in the hall brought some rags and wrapped them around my knees. And in this manner, crawling on my knees over the snow and ice, I dragged myself to the hospital.

In the hospital I encountered another feldscher, who had lived on the Yurkovskaya not far from our factory. When he recognized me, he became pale and trembled from pity and amazement. He ordered at once that I be undressed and given a warm bath. I was afterwards given clean linen and put into a warm, clean bed. This produced such a beneficial effect that I slept on uninterruptedly for thirty-six hours. I could not bring myself to part with the bed.

After the good rest I had, an operation was performed upon me. My friend the feldscher was not present — I was operated upon by the physician. When he commenced to open the sores, the pain made me wince and scream. The doctor smiled and observed, "Well, Beilis, now you know for yourself how it feels to be cut up. You can imagine now how Andriusha had felt when you were stabbing him and drawing his blood — all for the sake of your religion". You can imagine how cheerful I felt at this raillery of the doctor. He kept on cutting leisurely and I had to bite my lips not to let myself scream. After the operation, I was carried by two prisoners to my bed.

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I lay there for three days. In all decency I should have stayed there for a longer period of time, but the doctor was not inclined to make it "easy" for me. I was put in my usual raiments and was sent back to prison. In my room I did not find my former companions.

Since the solitude was weighing heavily upon me, I again asked for company. A second prisoner was brought in. In the beginning I feared he would prove another one of the Kozatchenko band, i.e. a spy. He proved, however, to be a very honest peasant.

My new companion was an inveterate smoker—in my room he was naturally forbidden to smoke. This was a great deprivation for him. He therefore asked in a couple of days that he be transferred to his former quarters since he could not live without smoking. The warden granted his request, and he was about to go back. However, when the guard came for him, he hesitated and said, "No, I have pity on this Jew; he is a very honest fellow. He likes my company and I will stay with him". And so he did. He stayed with me for two weeks and was subsequently released from prison. Before the parting he embraced me and wept. "I know", said he, "that you are suffering unjustly. Trust in God, He will help you. You will be released. The Jews are an honest people".

I was left alone a prey to heavy thoughts that were obsessing me to the point of melancholy.



CHAPTER X

THE FIRST VISIT OF MY LAWYERS

Eight months had elapsed since the ominous morning when I was first put behind the iron bars. Eight dark months rolled away and the end of my sufferings was not yet in view. Besides that I did not know whether anything was being done on my behalf in the outside world; and who was planning to intercede for me, to defend me.

About that time, November or December, I was informed by my wife and brother that immediately upon my arrest they had retained for me the services of the lawyer Margolin who was to defend me. I was also told that I could not see my attorney until I had first received the indictment. On one of these dreary days the door of my cell was suddenly opened and a distinguished gentleman of Jewish appearance entered and introduced himself as Mr. Gruzenberg, one of my attorneys. Hitherto, he had been unable to see me because of the aforementioned law. Now, however, with the indictment having been completed he was able to come and visit his client as frequently as desired. His appearance made a strong impression on me. Mr. Gruzenberg tried to cheer me up. "Control yourself. I come to you in the name of the Jewish people. You must forgive us since you are compelled to suffer for all of us. I am telling you I should consider myself happy to exchange your prisoner's clothes with you and to let you go free."

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"I have one request to make, Mr. Gruzenberg", was my reply. "A man must know his situation. Tell me please, how my case stands. I shall not lose courage even if things go rather unfavorably. However, I cannot live in this state of uncertainty. Tell me the truth".

"You are right", he said, "you ought to know all, but none of us is able to gauge the situation with precision. I had a similar case with Blondes (also accused of ritual murder) in Vilna. You can't tell how the thing will turn out". I told him what Fenenko had said to me during one of my interviews with him (quoting a Russian proverb) "when the corn is milled we will have some very fine flour". "Well, well", said Gruzenberg shaking his head, "we may have 'muka'" (a play on words, muka meaning both flour and trouble. Before leaving he cheered me up by saying that I was to be defended by the best lawyers of Russia, by Zarudny, Maklakoff, Grigorovitch-Barsky and others: that I should soon be visited by each of them.

His visit was a great relief for me. My faith grew stronger in my eventual release, though no false hopes were held out for me by my lawyers. I was cheered up by the very fact that there were people taking my interests to heart, that I was not forgotten, and that the greatest legal lights of Russia were eager to defend me. Mr. Grigorovitch-Barsky was the next lawyer to visit me. I inquired, "would it not be the thing to have me taken out on bail, or to appeal to the Czar himself for mercy"? He smiled and shook his head. "Do you know that the Czar has recently visited Kiev"? "Yes", I said, "the newly arrested prisoners told me about it. I have also heard that the chief of the "Okhrana", Kuliabko, who had originally arrested me, came to grief over the Czar's visit

BEILIS AND HIS COUNSELLORS



O. O. GRUZENBERG



W. A. MAKLAKOW



B. KARABCHEVSKY



MENDEL BEILIS



A. S. ZARUDNY



ARNOLD D. MARGOLIN



D. G. GRIGOROVICH-BARSKY

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since he proved unable to prevent the assassination of the Prime Minister Stolipin in the Czar's very presence".

"It is so", confirmed Grigorovitch-Barsky, "so now you know that the Czar was in Kiev. I was in the Government's service at the time as an assistant prosecuting attorney. I was a member of the deputation selected to welcome the Czar. One of my colleagues was with me. When in the Czar's presence, the P. A. of Kiev (Tchaplinsky), upon being introduced to the Czar, said to the latter: "Your Majesty, I am happy to inform you that the real culprit in Yustchinsky's murder has been discovered. That is, Beilis, a 'zhid' (a sheeny)". Upon hearing that the Czar bared his head and made the sign of the cross as an expression of his thanks to God. Now, I ask you, Beilis, to whom will you appeal for mercy, to the man who thanks God that a zhid is suspected of the murder"? I was nearly stunned with amazement. Mr. Barsky was silent for a while. I could hardly recover my senses from the unexpected story of Mr. Barsky about the Czar. I knew that Nicholas was not a friend of the Jews, but that he should openly exhibit so intense an interest and pleasure in the persecution of a Jew, and that before a gathering of his officials, was beyond my imagination.

"I'll tell you another thing", said Mr. Grigorovitch-Barsky in that friendly and winning way he had with him. "When the Czar was in Kiev he was expected one day to visit a certain place. A great gathering was waiting for him, and the crowd made one feel quite uncomfortable though strict order was maintained. I was there with a friend to see the procession. A certain Colonel passed by and pushed a Jew calling him 'Zhid'. I and my friend were in civilian dress at the time. The Jew, pushed by the Colonel was of fine appearance, behaved very well,

and in no way deserved the insult. I turned to the Colonel. 'Why were you so rude?' His answer was, 'You sheeny defender!' We had a heated argument and I eventually brought the Colonel before a judge, who gave him eight days prison, well deserved for his rudeness. All these unpleasant incidents brought me to the decision to resign my position with the Government. I gave up my Assistant P. A. post and became a lawyer".

Before Grigorovitch-Barsky came to me I was given a paper to sign in which I was officially informed that Schmakov, a lawyer on Yustchinsky's side was suing me for the amount of seven thousand rubles for civil damages. He would thus be able to take a part in the trial against me. During Grigorovitch-Barsky's visit I asked him who that man Schmakov was. Grigorovitch-Barsky told me that Schmakov was an old man, a well-known anti-Semite, whose opinions were of little general weight. My lawyer seemed to be rather optimistic about my case. He told me that the greatest experts of Russia and her greatest scientists would be summoned for the trial, and that Schmakov would appear ridiculous before such a gathering. We parted as if we were old friends.

After this, my lawyers visited me regularly. Mr. Margolin used to be a frequent visitor. He always kept in touch with my family and constantly encouraged me.



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CHAPTER XI

A CONVICT WITH A HEART

Being lonesome, I again asked the authorities to give me a companion in my loneliness. My petition was granted, and a Pole, Pashlovski, was brought into my cell. He was sentenced to Katorga, and was awaiting to be sent to Siberia. He was a very clever fellow although he had murdered more than one man in his life.

In the evening he was called to the prison office. I felt very uneasy about it. I knew it was a bad omen for me, since the man already being convicted, had very little to do with the office. When he returned, he seemed to be in good humor. He came over to me nearly bursting with laughter. "Why are you laughing", I asked, with uneasiness. "What happened in the office"? The prisoner answered, "I would tell you, Beilis, but you are too nervous. If I tell you the whole story you would become excited, so it is better for you not to know". I renewed my interrogation. "I see you are a good man since you are so mindful of my health. I thank you for that. Had you come in without laughing, I would not have known anything, but since you are my friend, you must tell me all. It is better to know the truth, even if it be unpleasant.

He thought for a while, and then with a wave of the hand as if making up his mind, told me. "Well, if you insist, this is what happened. I was brought into the office. I found quite a large gathering there. The

P. A., the Warden, were all in a lively confab. On the table was a silver cigarette box. The P. A. offered me a cigarette. You may imagine my amazement. Who was I and who were they? I, a convict, and they were treating me to cigarettes. Apparently they wanted me to do something for them. Well, I am nobody's fool. The Warden began to speak in the kindest, friendliest manner, as if the matter concerned his very life. 'You are a Christian, one of us', he said, 'and I am certain you care for our Christians, for our blood, as much as we do ourselves'. He hesitated for a while and then continued. 'You are in the same cell with Beilis. Tell me, what does he say? Has he told you anything?' My answer was, 'He is bewailing his bitter misfortunes. He complains that he is suffering unjustly, and undeservedly'. The P. A. joined in with a smile. 'We know that he says that; that is to be expected; but you are an intelligent man you understand people. You ought to discern the difference between his truths and his lies. Didn't he ever slip out with a word or something'?

"I saw at once it was a crooked band I was dealing with, so I spoke up. 'Look here, gentlemen, I grew up among Jews. At the age of six I lost my father and mother, became a total orphan. My relatives apprenticed me to a Jewish locksmith, and I learned the trade. I lived for twelve years in his house. I left it a grown up man with a trade. I was able to make money and I married. I had friends among Jews and also among Jewish converts. I daresay I know all the Jewish customs, and a good deal about their religious rites. I know it from A to Z. Small wonder since I grew up in a Jewish house as one of them. I know they would not eat an egg if there is a bloodclot in it. It is a 'Tref' with them. I have seen it a hundred times if once. I have seen them salting

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their meat and have asked the mistress of the house why they do it. 'Because this drives all the blood out of the meat' she told me. They do it 'because we must eat no blood whatever'.

"Now, when people come and tell me that the Jews use blood, human blood in particular; that Beilis has murdered a Christian child in order to have his blood, I who am a Christian and who believe in the Cross, tell you that all these stories are a set of despicable lies".

When I was through with my say, they all looked at me with murder in their eyes. They saw that they had the wrong man. The cigarette did not help much. Some of them lost their patience. "Well", said the P. A. "be that as it may, but does he never say anything in his sleep"? I said I never heard him talking in his sleep. They saw they couldn't get much out of me, and ordered me back to the cell. That is why I was laughing coming into the room. I can see they have no actual proof against you, and they are looking for the "snows of yesteryear".

They did not keep the fellow long with me. They saw that he was too friendly towards me. He was taken away. Since they could not make him serve their purposes, we had to part. From all these incidents, the impression grew stronger with me that the Government felt its case to be weak; that the indictment was feeble. It was clear that had the black hundreds felt their case to be stronger, they would not resort to the help of spies and Katorjniks.

CHAPTER XII

NEW INTRIGUES

Rumors began to circulate in the prison that a certain journalist Brazul-Brushkofsky had written to the P. A. that he had information indicating that the murder of the boy Andriusha had been committed by Vera Tchebiriak's lover. The rumors had it further that Brazul's statement made on the grounds of Tchebiriak's admissions was not found to be sufficiently supported by evidence. Not until the Spring of 1912 did the investigation discover the right trail, and Brazul-Brushkofsky with friend Krasovsky came out with a new statement. The first indictment was set aside and a new one drawn up. Then it was that Vera Tchebiriak was arrested. All this aroused new hopes in me. However, they were shortlived. In the summer a new District Attorney was sent down from St. Petersburg and gave the investigation a new turn.

A day or two after the incident with the Katorjnik, already described, I was summoned to the District Court. I went there with joy. I was pleased to be able to see the outside world again and breathe the fresh air. This time my escort took me in the tram car. As ill luck would have it the car caught fire, so that we had to go on foot. A lot of people knew that I was to be taken down to the Court and some came to take a look at me, and to take my photograph. In the Hall where I was brought, I found the D. A. Mashkevitch and a certain professor.

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"Look here, Beilis", said Mashkevitch, "three hairs were found on Andriusha's trousers, so that if you do not object I would ask some of your hair to be shown to an expert".

I could scarcely look at the man but I answered politely, "If you need it you can take it". "No", said the D. A. "you must do it yourself". I took the scissors from his desk, cut some hair off my head and put them in an envelope.

Later I rather regretted my course. Who knows what these tricksters might be up to? They might dye the hair. But later I thought let them do their worst. The request for my hair was all that was wanted of me for the time being. I was immediately sent back to jail.

Three days later I was called to the prison office. My fingerprints were wanted. "Is it done in every prisoner's case"? I inquired. "No", I was told, "only to those whose indictment calls for 'Katorga'". "What is this for"? was my further inquiry. I was told that an imprint of fingers was left on Andriusha's belt-buckle. My fingerprints were wanted in order to compare the two. The finger-print obtained I was despatched back to the cell.

About this period permission was granted to my wife to see me in prison. "To see" is about the true extent of the favor. For we could only see each other separated by double bars, and that for no longer than five minutes. The poise and tumult in the visiting quarters was such that we could hardly hear each other. Nevertheless, it was a great joy to me.

One day I was told the glad news that my wife and children would be allowed to see me in the prison-office. I was immediately conducted to the office. When I entered there, none of my family was to be seen. I sat down to

wait patiently. I became restless, however. I had not seen my children for a long time. How did they look? How much they had suffered—and all for what? Minutes seemed longer than years. How long was I to wait?

Six officials sat in the office, among them the D. A. Mashkevitch. They were eyeing me keenly all the time I was sitting there. They were exchanging remarks between themselves.

Finally my wife, the children and my brother were brought in. My wife's sister was not allowed to enter. When I saw the youngest boy, four years old, I took him in my arms and began to kiss him. A guard rushed to me and snatched the child from my arms. It was not permitted to kiss one's own child.

The child began to weep. He was frightened by the rudeness of the guard, the presence of the officials with their shining buttons, and most of all—with my "jail-raiments". I lost my self-control and commenced to shout with tears in my voice: "What right have you to do all this? Have you no children yourself? Don't you know a father's feelings? Are you so heartless"?

I noticed that several of the officials turned away their faces and were wiping their eyes with their handkerchiefs. I was permitted to take the child in my arms. I asked my wife how things were going with her. She answered sadly: "Even if I have enough to live on, what good is it when you are suffering so cruelly and unjustly"?

We thus spent a few minutes together, and then my family were told they must leave. I remained alone. The P. A. Tchaplinsky came over to me, offered me a cigarette and said in a voice of "compassion"; "Yes, Beilis, this is how your Jewish friends are acting. When Beilis was needed, he was given money, and was a very, very good

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man. And now when he is no more needed he is completely forgotten by them. Your poor wife is also suffering much and must be angry with the Jews”.

Tchaplinsky spoke very slowly and distinctly, and simulated a tone of friendliest sympathy. His every word, however, was like a stab in my heart, and the cunning, malicious expression of his face added to my bitterness. I turned to him and asked for permission to say a few words. He encouraged me: “Certainly, — you may speak”.

“If an atrocious villain were found capable of murdering an innocent child, all in order to incite pogroms against the Jews, how could the Jews have a part in it? What had the Jewish people to do with it? Let me be kept in prison. I have patience. The trial will show, however, that I am innocent”.

None of them spoke to me any more. Tchaplinsky turned away and was apparently far from being pleased with my words. I was let out of the office.

My imprisonment lasted for over a year. Four hundred days elapsed from the dark morning of my first arrest by Colonel Kuliabko, when I had been torn away from my wife and family. I kept on hoping for a long while: tomorrow I shall be free. Instead of freedom I had to feed on hopes and expectations.

One evening While I was sitting in my dingy cell, alone with my meditations, I heard footsteps and several voices in the hall, and a woman's voice said at my door: “It would be curious to see this rascal”.

The door opened and four persons entered. One of them was in a general's uniform. The woman looked at me and said in a horrified tone: “What a terrible-looking creature. How fierce he looks”.

The general came closer to me and said: “Beilis, you

will soon be let free". "On what grounds"? I ask him. His answer was: "The tercentary jubilee of the reign of the Romanoff dynasty is soon to be celebrated. There will be a manifesto pardoning all "katorjniks".

"That manifesto", said I, "will be for 'Katorjniks', not for me. I need no manifesto, I need a fair trial".

"If you will be ordered to be released, you'll have to go".

No,—even if you open the doors of prison, and threaten me with shooting, I shall not leave. I shall not go without a trial. I am strong enough to suffer all until the trial".

While I was speaking, they were all standing quiet and listening with curiosity to every word of mine. Even that finiky lady that was at first so much frightened by my appearance and thought me so cruel looking, even she approached me to have a better look at me. When I was through, the general continued in the same vein. "Listen to reason, Beilis. You know very well yourself, that you are suffering unjustly. I should probably do the same thing if I were in your place. You were a poor man and you did what you were told. If you tell us the truth you would be making a very fortunate move. You would be sent abroad and would be provided for the rest of your life; your action would supply an answer to the question that is occupying the whole world at present. However, you are persisting in hiding the truth—with your silence you think to protect the Jewish nation, and you are only ruining yourself. Why should you suffer for nothing? It is up to you but to say the word and you would be a happy man for the remainder of your life".

I could hardly keep my self-control while the man was talking. Every word of his was disgusting to me.

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He actually came to give me some good advice. He sincerely believed that he was showing sympathy with my situation — according to him I had been hired by the Jews to do my piece of dirty work and now he wanted me to tell the “truth”. He came to exercise his influence with me. I saw that further conversation was useless. I could hardly stand it any longer. I gave him a short answer: “It is true, the whole world is waiting for the truth. The trial will show the real truth”.

“Well, we shall see”, muttered the general and waving his hand, as if giving me up for hopeless, he left my room with his escort.

The first year of my imprisonment had drawn to its close. My prison cell was far from being comfortable — the walls were plastered with cement, and during the winter frost they always had an icy coating. The heating was insufficient. During the warmer days the lime on the walls would thaw and the walls would be dripping with moisture. The dripping from the ceiling made it almost impossible for me to sleep. I was dressed in the usual prison garb, i.e. a shirt of sack linen and a long coat of raggy cloth. I had to wear my shirts for stretches of two and three months. There was no lack of the usual cooties. In the prison itself the mortality from typhoid fever, was about six or seven men per day. This was in no way surprising in view of the extraordinary filth, the disgusting food, the unheated rooms (not infrequently during the frosts I used to find my hand frozen to the ice on the wall). All these things made a perfect breeding ground for various epidemics.

In addition to all these hardships I used to be harried by frequent “searchings” instituted by the administration. The door of my cell was locked by no less than thirteen locks — that meant that each time the door was to be opened,

all thirteen locks had to be shot back. The sound of the rasping lock-springs used to set my nerves on edge. I was obsessed with the illusion that somebody behind me was hitting me repeatedly upon the head—it was one blow after another. The searches were usually performed by a squad of five under the supervision of one of the deputy wardens. Every time they would come in the first order for me was to undress. Often they had to unbutton me for my fingers were awkward because of the cold. They were quite rude and usually tore off a number of buttons during the operation. Some exercised their rude sense of humor. "You liked to stab the boy Andriusha, to draw his blood. We will do the same thing to you now"—that was the standing joke. They would also look into my mouth lest I might have something hidden there. They would pull my tongue out in order to see deeper and better. All these tortures and insults I had to undergo six times a day. It is hard to believe, but it is the truth. No protests were of any avail. Their intentions were to inflict the utmost inconvenience upon me. They wanted me to die without resorting to actual murder. They would not poison me outright, for that would create trouble. I believe they wanted to drive me to suicide. Cases of suicide were quite frequent in the prison. Prisoners used to hang themselves to get rid of persecution and torture. The administration must have thought that I would succumb under their persecution. A weaker vessel in their opinion, would not be able to stand it and would take his life. In such an eventuality, the charge of ritual murder would never be wiped off the Jewish nation. The black hundreds were to be relied upon to interpret suicide as having been caused by my fear of trial, and by no remorse for the murder committed.

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My life was thus hanging on a hair. I saw once how another prisoner was shot to death in the prison hall after some altercation with one of the guards. This murder was easily explained away. The guard tore one of his sleeves and reported that he shot the prisoner in self-defence. There was no punishment, of course, for such justifiable self-defense. On one of the walls of my cell there hung a set of prison rules. One of its clauses was to the effect that a prisoner insulting a guard or being insubordinate could be murdered on the spot, and the guard was to receive a reward to the amount of three rubles. The expression "assault" needed no special interpretation. Nor was the term "insubordination" less inclusive. If a guard ordered the prisoner to walk quicker or to stop and wait, and the guard was not instantly obeyed, it meant resistance and insubordination and the guard was justified in shooting the prisoner.

Generally speaking, the life of a prisoner in jail is hell. A prisoner from the very moment that the prison gates are closed behind him, is completely in the power of the administration, and his life is in constant danger. Nevertheless, in spite of all the inconveniences that were heaped upon me, and all the dangers, they only served to strengthen my determination and to give me more courage to go through with this great trial, and while I was closely watched by the administration for some excuse or pretext for doing away with me, I was always on guard to accommodate them in the least. In more than one case, there was actual provocation and foul play to represent my actions as insubordination and resistance. They tried often to put me in a situation where they could use their arms. But I was extremely careful. One thing I always had before me: the shameful charge of ritual murder

must be wiped off the good name of the Jewish nation. It was my fate, it had to be done through me, and in order to be effected, I was to remain alive. I had to exercise every ounce of power, I had to suffer all without murmuring, but the enemies of my people were not to triumph.



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CHAPTER XIII

BETWEEN HOPE AND DESPAIR

The days were dragging along. When was my trial to take place? There were days when I felt that I was perilously near to insanity. On such occasions I would look in amazement at my guard, at myself, and would think, is all this reality? Am I the man lying here on the cold and filthy floor, among these creeping reptiles—is this the same Mendel Beilis who used to be a man of consequence, dressed like other humans and living a peaceful life with his wife and children? I experienced moral tortures of a kind hardly possible to bear or even to describe. Lack of exercise, and constant worrying deprived me of sleep. If at times I managed to fall asleep, I was troubled by the wildest nightmares, which exhausted me more than the sleep refreshed. The usual kind of nightmare was, that I was either led to execution, or being chased after, choked or beaten. I would awake, shuddering with fear and with the exertion of having tried to escape from my persecutor. I felt sort of relief in finding upon awakening that I was still in jail—in the actual prison and not in the torture house of my dreams. The nervous strain was depriving me of all strength, and I feared I should have to succumb. I endeavored to find consolation in the thought of the speedy approach of the day of trial. The trial was to come some day. The world would know the truth—the world would know that I am innocent and the Jewish

nation unspotted by the terrible calumnies originated by its detractors. The Jews do not murder nor do they draw the blood of gentiles.

However, the day of the trial was not as yet definitely determined upon. The court authorities were as yet uncertain about what was to be done. I was told once that the trial was to take place in March; next time it was postponed until April. There was no certainty about it. Why were they so undecided about it? Why were they so slow?

It was all very simple. The indictment was set up, and none of those interested in pushing it was satisfied with the indictment. The "sliedovatel" Fenenko, told me himself that he did not press the charges against me, that the material gathered by the investigation concerning the murder gave him no grounds upon which to prosecute me, — still less to press a charge of ritual murder.

The procurator, however, was more stubborn: a case against me had to be made up at all costs. A Jew was to be imprisoned in order that the Jews might remember the case for generations to come. This is why an indictment was set up that had no foundation supporting it.

In the beginning of May 1913, the indictment was formally presented to the superior court of the Kiev Province, for that court's endorsement, and for the court's decision as to the term of trial. A new period of despair began for me. If the case was to be considered as an ordinary Capital crime, there was a total lack of proof and evidence, upon which to base an accusation against me personally. As a Capital crime, all the indications would compel the authorities to arrest Vera Tchebiriak with her gang of thieves — and to press charges against them. Inasmuch as the Czar himself expressed the wish

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that a Jew was to be persecuted, and the higher officials naturally wished to humor him, they were thus compelled to institute a law process against a Jew, i.e. me. And if so, the case had to be, so to speak, "a ritual case" — why then did they not state that fact in the indictment? Therefore, the indictment charges were not satisfactory to any of those interested in the prosecution. I was neither "meat nor fish", "neither ritual nor unritual", i.e. the Czar would not be pleased and the Jews were apparently scoring in the first set-to.

After long discussions, disputations and hair-splitting, the day of the trial was finally determined upon to begin in the end of May. I had already mentioned that the murderers of Andriusha were accused of malice aforethought, and having committed the crime in a manner to cause the victim "grievous torture". It was mentioned in the indictment that "two Jews dressed in unusual garb came to Beiliss" and that the Jews were seen to perform their prayers, "that Beilis baked each year matzohs for Passover." Some "other crimes" of a similar nature were also enumerated.

My lawyers preparing for all eventualities insisted at the court that experts and scientists be summoned for the trial. Among others they requested the presence of Professors Kokovtzeff, Tikhomiroff and Troyitzky—all professors of theology or of Hebrew language in the higher academies for clergymen. They requested also that the former procurator of the Holy Synod, Prince Obolensky and Herman Struck of the Theological Faculty of the University of Berlin be also summoned as experts.

One day, while sitting absorbed in thoughts of my forthcoming trial, I heard a noise in the hall which was the signal for the opening of my many door locks. I

expected to see the spiteful faces of my guards coming to announce the date of my trial. The locks kept on clanging, all thirteen of them, the door was opened—and instead of the guards, Mr. Grigorovitch-Barsky was ushered in. With his usual kindness and cordiality he began to cheer me up and inquired as to my treatment at the hands of the administration.

Thereupon he said, "Mr. Beilis, rumors are current to the effect that in spite of the second indictment presented to you it looks as if the whole trial will never take place".

"Why"? I asked, perturbed as much as amazed.

"It is simple", was his answer. "There is too much proof against the real murderers. New facts have come to the notice of the public and the officials. A Russian journalist, Brazul-Brushkofsky, who has especially devoted himself to the case, has collected new material, and presented it to Colonel Ivanoff (of the Okhrana). The evidence gathered by this journalist is so important that the investigation is likely to be reopened and there is quite a probability that your indictment will be altogether squashed. Of course, it will be a bitter pill for your persecutors, and they will put up a fight, but it looks as if they will have to give in".

The joy was so great that I began to weep. "Do not weep, Mr. Beilis", said Mr. Barsky, quite moved himself. "I understand your situation quite well. Be certain you will be eventually released. It is impossible to foretell, of course, how long they will drag it on. You can see yourself, they are trying their best to tangle up the case. But we feel very hopeful their efforts will come to naught. If not presently, then somewhat later they will have to

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release you". Mr. Barsky bid me farewell with cordial wishes of seeing me soon free in the midst of my family.

I was beyond myself with joy. The whole indictment against me was falling to pieces. The real murderers were finally found out. It was true the investigation had to take some more time. If all the officials and intriguers who were busying themselves with my case had really wished to find out the real perpetrators of Yustchinsky's murder, all they had to do was to get hold of Vera Tchebiriak and her gang, with the same energy at least that the investigators had shown against me: it was sufficient to have had them arrested at the very beginning of the investigation, before my own arrest. But "they" did not want that.

How about it now! The truth apparently was going to come out after all. Even the black hundreds were coming to realize that I was innocently thrown into the dungeon and that I ought to be released.

I experienced all the joys of the expectation of approaching liberation. I was practically forgetting all the sufferings of the past year and exercised my imagination in calling up the picture of the morning when the guards would come in with the announcement, "Beilis, you are free! You can go home. You are innocent".

*The new developments announced by Mr. Barsky threw me into a state of impatient restlessness. Every time I heard footsteps in the hall I felt certain that the administration was coming to announce my release. Several days passed in this manner, days of strain and impatience. Seeing that my hopes were not being realized, I began to have doubts. Who knows whether the information is based on solid facts? Perhaps my lawyer simply wanted to cheer me up. Possibly the case took so bad a turn that they wanted to keep up my energy and strengthen me

in order that I might be able to sustain the coming bitter days.

However, I did not want to believe in this, my latter version. From Mr. Barsky's previous visits I felt assured he was a frank and sincere man. He would not conceal from me, even if it came to the worst. He would tell me the truth. And since he told me there were chances for my speedy liberation how could I doubt his word? The more so, that we both knew how completely innocent I was. The days were passing; weeks and months finally elapsed and there was no change in my situation. I understood that new circumstances must have arisen, but whether for the better or for the worse I did not exactly know. Above all, I was afraid of the new name of Colonel Ivanoff, a colonel and a gendarme. That was not a good omen in my opinion. The man was not likely to do anything in my favor. His duty, of course, was to please the higher officials, not to alleviate my fate by any chance.

Things became quiet for a while. No one came to visit me. I was neither summoned for the trial nor was I told to go free.



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CHAPTER XIV

ONCE MORE BEFORE THE INQUISITION

Before I received the second indictment, I had been summoned several times by the "Sliedovatel". He was the notorious anti-Semite already mentioned, Mr. Mashkevitch. Once during the interrogation he inquired, "Tell me, Beilis, had your father ever gone to see Tzadikim"? His question amazed me. I expected the announcement of my liberation, while he was apparently starting the interrogation all over again. What new tricks had he up his sleeve? Was not the interrogation all over? And what remained was either to have me tried, or to release me.

Once more the same old story, with the Chassidim and Tzadikim. Were not the authorities straining their point a little too far? I told him I could not well remember. If it happened, it was years ago. "Are you a "Chassid" or a "Misnagid"? he asked me smilingly.

"I am a Jew", was my reply, "and I don't know the difference between these two groups. We are all Jews".

"Do you know whether Zaitzev ever went to a Rabbi"?

"I don't know".

"Are you not related to the family of Bal-Shem-Tov"?

"I have no idea of that, Mr. Sliedovatel".

"Do you pray with a talis, or without a talis"?

I had answered this question once before. Before my marriage I had prayed without a talis, after my marriage with the talis.

"What do you need the talis for"?

"I don't know what it is for".

"Now, Beilis, tell me", the Sliedovatel's smile was becoming quite cunning, "What is it exactly that you call an Afikomon"?

It was the same thing all over again. The same foolish questions with which the first Sliedovatel had confronted me over a year ago. Besides that, I thought the new man probably wished to find out whether Fenenko had been investigating the case in the right manner, and once he had the information he would release me. Fenenko himself had asked me those foolish questions, and didn't he finally say he had no evidence against me? I was unable to explain properly to the Sliedovatel what the Afikomon was. In my childhood I lived in a village, then I spent several years in the military service. I did not know much about religious rites. I used to eat Matzoth, eat the "Afficumen" which was actually a piece of Matzo. I did not know any more about it. And had I even known, it would have been difficult for me to explain. He had some more questions. -

"Have you not a brother a Rabbi or Shochet"? "No, we have no rabbis in the family. If there were any, fifty or a hundred years ago, I am not aware of it. There might have been a Rabbi or a Shochet at that time. However, not now". He was silent for a minute or two. He looked as if he wished to remind himself of something. He looked several times at some papers before him. At last he asked another question. "Have you any connection with Schnayer Zalmon Schneyerson, the well known Rabbi of Ladi"? "No", was my answer, "I have a good friend by that name. He lives in Kiev and often came to visit

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me, but I do not know the Schneyerson family in Ladi, and am in no way related to it”.

With these, and similar questions, he kept plying me for about two hours. Then he started to read from a book by a scientist Pronaitis who had been endeavoring to prove with all sorts of sophistry and misquotations from the Torah and Talmud that the Jews actually use blood for their Matzoths, and that the blood was baked in the Afikomon. The Sliedovatel mentioned also the names of Schmakov, Professor Sikorsky and Golubov, who were also supposed to know all about Jewish religious rites. In short, he manifested during the interrogation what he must have considered as great erudition in our Torah. His questions provoked a heart burning anger in me. It was he who was drawing my blood with every question. However, I was helpless. I had to answer him. I was a prisoner. He had all authority over me and could do what he liked. The questions themselves would not have produced such a painful impression upon me had I not noticed the manner in which he treated my answers. I could see that all these questions were not put in order to clear up the case, but rather out of curiosity to hear what my answers would be. I could see from his smiles and his displeasure at my answers, and from some of his remarks that all these questions were superfluous, that as far as he was concerned, he had it all clear, and was sure of his course. He knew for instance, and felt quite certain that the Jews used blood for Passover; that the blood was put in the Afikomon, and that all that was substantiated by

such scientists as Pronaitis, Schmakov and Sikorsky. From this interrogation I received the impression that my indictment would not be squashed before the trial; that the trial would actually take place. I could not understand, however, the reason for the additional interrogations since the indictment itself had already been set up in form. Presently, this was also clarified in my mind.



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CHAPTER XV

MY ATTORNEYS ARE PERSECUTED

In this state of uncertainty I spent the summer. The autumn brought no changes. Winter was approaching. During the months in question I was not visited by anyone and did not know therefore, what was taking place outside the prison walls. I had hoped before for a speedy date of trial which could have revealed to the world my innocence. I was disappointed. Later I expected the indictment and the trial to be quashed, since I was told by Mr. Barsky that charges against me were found baseless, and the case invalid.

By this time the investigation began all over again. Apparently, there was a new turn to the case, but just what was its meaning? Although the interrogations conducted by Mashkevitch had been concluded several months ago, I was still kept in the dark. What was going on behind the stage?

I was informed at the time by one of my lawyers that Grigorovitch-Barsky had been telling me the honest truth. All of my lawyers had been of the opinion that my indictment and the whole case would be quashed and the trial would never take place.

As I have already mentioned, the journalist Brazul-Brushkovsky together with a police-captain Krassovsky had undertaken in earnest to find out the real murderers and to gather the facts for the evidence. They had made, with

this purpose in view, the acquaintance of Viera Tchebiriak and of her gang, visited them several times, interrogated her neighbors, collected considerable material and presented it before Colonel Ivanoff.

Colonel Ivanoff undertook a careful investigation in order to verify Brushkovsky's assertions. As a result of his efforts, the colonel came to the conclusion that Yustchinsky's murder was the work of Tchebiriak's criminal band. Ivanoff conducted his investigations in strictest secrecy, and upon their termination sent the material to the prosecutor of the Superior Court.

At first the prosecutor's office showed no interest in the Colonel's reports. Though these reports came from an official source and what is more from the gendarme (the political Secret Police), the prosecutor ignored them. Nothing would have come out of it had not my attorneys taken a determined stand. When my lawyers came to know that new facts had been discovered they demanded that the preliminary investigation be reopened. This happened in the spring of 1912.

The higher judicial authorities and the "black-hundreds" were much displeased by the new turn of events. They naturally feared a new investigation on the basis of Brushkovsky's discoveries, such action would result in the discovery of the true criminals. This was what they feared above all. Yet, they could not go openly against the letter of the law. When new evidence appeared, the law called for a new investigation.

Fenenko did not suit them for the new work. He was too "soft". He was therefore given leave of absence, i.e. simply removed from any dealing with my case. Besides that, the P. A. Tchaplinsky was ordered to come to Petrograd for a conference with the Minister of Justice Shtche-

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glovitoff concerning my case; the procurator was also to confer with the higher "black-hundreds".

In the Ministry of Justice there was at the time a group of officials who were inclined to have my case quashed in order to "get out of the slimy bog". That tendency prevailed for a certain time, and it was then that Grigorovitch-Barsky announced the "happy tidings".

In the end, however, the "black-hundreds" prevailed and won out. They insisted that if a new investigation was to take place, it had to be done "right", i.e. the new indictment was to contain the charge of "ritual murder" without any evasions.

The final decision was worthy of the corruption brought by Shtcheglovitoff into the administration of justice. It was decided to have a new investigation and an indictment based on its results, but the indictment was to come first. This time it was to be the "right kind": with "ritual murder" etc. The investigation was to be held just for the sake of appearance. And this was exactly what they did.

Mashkevitch was put in charge of the investigation. He did not care for any "fine points". With him it was all very simple: he was looking for chassidim, tzadikim, rabbis, white robes, in short, all the paraphernalia of "ritual murder" as written in the books of the fathers of the inquisition.

For the sake of appearances, the materials gathered up by Brushkovsky were also examined, but instead of sending them to the prosecutor, as was the rule, they were first dispatched to the Ministry in Petersburg, and then were sent back again with proper commentaries and annotations.

As I was told, the authorities were unable to find in the Procurator's Office of Kiev a man capable of formulating

the indictment as it was desired, "with the teeth in it". Finally, a suitable person was found. Even at that the indictment was not prepared at once. It was turned "inside out" and doctored up several times. The work was done by the A. P. A. Count Rozvadovsky. When it was ready it was forwarded to the Superior Court of Kiev for approval.

The enemies of our people were not satisfied with their work. They now started to get after those who wished to discover the truth.

The Chief of the Secret Police of Kiev, Mishtchuk was prosecuted together with the detectives, Smalovick and Klein: they were charged with having been "partial" in their investigation, i.e. that they had leaned rather towards my side. Mishtchuk was found guilty and received a year of imprisonment with deprivation of civil rights. The two detectives were punished in the same manner.

The police captain Krassovsky who had a record of twenty years service in the police was charged with having embezzled the amount of seventy-five kopeks (about forty cents). This sounds like a joke when we think of the million rubles involved in the thievery of the higher officials. The case against Krassovsky, however, was dismissed.

The journalist Brushkovsky was prosecuted by Vera Tchebiriak for criminal "libel". The same happened to the well-known journalist S. Yablonovsky. Of course Vera Tchebiriak didn't do it of her own accord. She was told to do so by those above.

Thereupon the black hundreds turned their attention to my lawyer Margolin. First of all because he published a book against the ritual murder calumny. The prosecutor based his charges on the assumption that Mr. Margolin was thus trying to influence the inhabitants of Kiev, from among

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whom Jury would eventually be selected for the trial. The second charge was that he had attempted to bribe the woman Tchebiriak to have her assume the guilt of Yustchinsky's murder; that he offered to pay her forty thousand dollars in case she consented to "confess".

A similar prosecution was instituted against Mr. Barsky for having signed a public protest against the ritual calumny. He received a reprimand from the court. His subsequent appeal was lost in the higher court.

Hearing of all these events I could well see that my case took an unfavorable turn. I saw a closely woven net about to entangle me. My lawyer tried to keep my courage up and assured me that in spite of all machinations the truth would finally prevail. With these hopes I set myself to wait for the long postponed trial.



CHAPTER XVI

THE ATTEMPT TO POISON ME

The Spring of 1913 came. I had not the fortune to appreciate as did all other creatures, the awakening of nature. All were free and merry except me. It was the third year of my imprisonment in the dark cell where I could not even move freely. For over two years I could scarcely see my family. I had to wallow in the filth, to live in the sordid and damp air of the jail, hardly ever seeing God's sun which shines equally upon the righteous and upon the sinners: the rays of the sun could scarcely penetrate through my prison window. However, I felt more cheerful. It was not so cold in my room and the mild winds coming through the gratings refreshed me. On one of these days I received a visit from Mr. Grigorovich-Barsky. After the usual greetings he told me he had a request to make of me.

"What could it be"? was my inquiry. "What could you possibly want of me"?

"Yes", he continued, "I want to ask you something. It will be hard but you must do it".

"What is it"?

"You must cease to receive food from home".

"If you say so", was my answer, "I shall do so. You know, no doubt, why you are asking it. Could you tell me your reasons"?

"I certainly shall. I am asking you because the black

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hundreds have been writing in the newspapers lately that the Jews are attempting to poison you, out of alleged fear that you might slip up with a word and confess your guilt. This makes us in our turn afraid that the black hundreds may arrange your poisoning in order not to lose their case against you before the whole world. If you die now, they believe their accusations against the Jewish people will remain unremoved. Those must be their intentions. We have therefore decided that you must cease to receive food packages from home. So as to stop the insinuations of those hooligans. If you receive no food from outside they will not be able to insinuate that the Jews are bent on poisoning you. Undoubtedly, it will be hard upon you, but it must be done”.

I promised, of course, to do as he told me. Later I thought over the matter. If the black hundreds insist that I am likely to be poisoned it looks as though they are bent on doing it themselves. I was afraid lest it be done through the prison guards.. I therefore petitioned the warden that I be permitted to take my food from the common kettle myself, instead of it being brought into my cell as was the usual procedure. At first, when I was in prison with a number of men in the same room, we were given food in one large bowl for ten or twelve men. I was not then afraid of poison for they would have had to poison the whole crowd in order to get rid of me. Now I was all alone in the cell, and was getting my food in a plate through an aperture in the door, and I did not feel quite assured of my safety.

My petition was at first refused. I was told, “if you want to eat, eat what you are given—if not, you can starve. No special privileges for you. We shall not poison you—it is your Jews that you have to beware of. They

are not satisfied with using our blood and are inventing additional lies to make us appear ridiculous”.

I had reasons to be stubborn. I declared a hunger strike. Three days elapsed—whenever a prisoner doesn't eat for a few days the P. is summoned to investigate. The P. appeared. I told him I should like to get my food myself from the kettle—not to have it brought into my room.

His reply was: “It cannot be permitted; you must not leave your cell. You are supposed to be under strict confinement. The other prisoners and guards must not even look at you”.

“Well”, I answered, “let them turn away when I draw my ration”.

Somewhat to my surprise, after considerable bickering and argument I was allowed to get my food from the common kettle. I was again reduced to the half starvation diet. I was receiving no food from home and the prison broth was unfit to eat.



THE STORY OF MY SUFFERINGS

CHAPTER XVII

A MURDERER'S SUICIDE

About that time I was told quite an interesting story, which I expected to be of great use to me. However, it proved to be a disappointment. Here is a short account of it. When the new evidence collected by the Journalist Brushkovsky was being examined, the authorities arrested Tchebiriak's friends, the thieves Rudzinsky, Singayevsky and Latischeff. They were arrested upon altogether different charges. One day Latischeff (who was the principle murderer) was summoned by the Slidovatel (it was still in the days of Fenenko). Fenenko commenced to ask his prisoners questions relating to my case. At the same time he mentioned that according to some new evidence, Latischeff was implicated in Andriusha's murder, with the others of the band, and that they had done it upon Tchebiriak's instigation. The Slidovatel was giving such details, his information seemed to be so exact, that made a strong impression upon Latischeff.

After an interrogation which had lasted more than an hour, a confession was drawn up and Latischeff was told to sign it. He actually signed it. Apparently he was at the time somewhat confused—and under the influence of the assurance with which Fenenko told him of the new evidence. Later, however, he must have regretted that he signed the confession in a hurry and thus implicated himself. He made a move for the desk in order to destroy

apparently both the writing and the signature. But his escort was on the alert and prevented him from snatching the document from the desk. This alone was sufficient proof that Latsisheff was somehow involved in Andriusha's murder. Three days later he was again summoned before the Sliedovatel. Fenenko began to ask him further questions about the crime. This time the questions were hitting so close to the point that Latsisheff became completely confused in his explanations. The Sliedovatel began to write the confessions. Latsisheff noticed a carafe of water standing on the window-sill and asked for permission to take a drink. He approached the window leisurely and had his drink. The window was open, Latsisheff jumped through it, fell from a height of four stories, and was instantly killed. The reasons for his suicide were very simple. He was the arch murderer and leader of the gang. When he saw that the truth was finally discovered, he understood that he would have to spend the rest of his life in prison. He decided to put an end to his life.

Although his suicide produced a strong impression, it apparently did not influence the course of my case. The new Sliedovatel understood better than Fenenko how to do his work so as to please the black hundreds and those "higher up". The other two murderers Rudzinsky and Singayevsky were released shortly afterwards.



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CHAPTER XVIII

THE NEW INDICTMENT

One day I was again called to the prison office. In the office I found the Sliedovatel Mashkevitch sitting quite at his ease at the desk and apparently in the best of spirits. After having muttered something in answer to my greeting, he took off the desk a document of many pages and handed it over to me.

"This is your indictment", he said with an air of self importance.

I was at a loss for what to think. The first indictment was a short affair of five pages.

This one was practically a book of about thirty pages. I expected no good out of this new visitation.

Quite downcast, I was slowly going back to my cell. Since I was very slow, feeling weak with apprehension and confusion, my guards cheered me up with a couple of blows on my back. In the cell I lay down upon my cot and could not raise my head, still less read the indictment. I looked upon this roll of paper which represented what the higher officials wished to have written about me and my alleged crimes. And yet I was an innocent man, who, as is, never hurt a fly in his life. I was being kept a prisoner while the actual murderers were promenading free on the streets, protected by what was called "Russian justice".

And so the die was cast; the lot fell upon me — they



Beilis is given the account
of indictment

could not find anyone else. They were searching and investigating and finally decided in the "higher spheres" that I must be tried, and if possible convicted.

Well, then, let the trial take place, said I to myself, and let the whole world know what atrocious villainies are being committed in the Holy Czarist Russia. I jumped from the bed and grabbed the indictment to see what these people were charging me with. I had to strain my eyes in order to see the small letters. My eyesight was affected by the darkness prevailing in the cell, and I could not read it, but in short stretches. What were they seeking and what had they found?

It looked simple, when the autopsy upon the murdered boy's body was performed, a number of wounds were observed upon the various parts of the body. There were thirteen wounds on the throat, on the skull and around the ears — in all thirty-seven wounds were discovered upon the whole body. Upon the basis of the autopsy and analysis Professor Obolensky of Kiev University, together with

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his assistant, came to the conclusion that the wounds on the neck and the skull had been inflicted while the heart had still been strong. The other wounds on the body had been inflicted when the heart became weaker. Thus, the first stabs were those upon the throat and the head—the last ones were those near the heart. They were also of the opinion that the stab in the heart was inflicted by pushing a knife up to the hilt, which could be seen by measuring the depth of the wound. Their conclusion was that the assassins had been deliberately torturing the child.

Professor Kosorotoff, whose opinion was also asked, confirmed that of his colleagues. He stated that the murder could have been perpetuated by one as well as by several murderers. He was also of the opinion that it was the intention of the culprits to inflict torture upon the child.

This was the expert opinion upon the murder. After that it became necessary to find the culprit—to find out why Andriusha had been slain, and at this point the indictment resolved itself into a set of wild stories in which one was able to discern the whole frame-up.

The indictment stated that at the beginning of the investigation, it had been found that on March the 12th, at 6 in the morning, the boy Andriusha left his house for school. It had been discovered later that he had not attended school on that day and had not returned home.

At first his mother thought that he went to spend the night with a relative Natalie Yustchinska. In the morning, the mother found that the boy had not been seen at the relatives', and a search for him began. The search lasted for several days, until finally he was found dead. In the beginning there were rumors that his mother had showed little interest in the fate of her son. Moreover, when he had been found dead, she was alleged not to have mani-

fested any motherly feelings. She did not weep nor seem to be particularly disturbed. Because of all that, she was arrested and the police searched her house. After several days of detention, the authorities reached the conclusion that the rumors were unfounded and baseless inventions of her enemies.

About the same time, rumors commenced to circulate that the Jews had murdered Andriusha. The indictment stated that the authorities had not attached much importance to those rumors, because they had still been under the impression that Andriusha's mother was implicated in the murder. For witnesses appeared declaring that the boy's mother had not manifested any sorrow upon the discovery of the body; that a day or two after the disappearance of the boy his mother was seen dragging something enclosed in a heavy bag, in company with another man.

The investigation had also taken up some other trail in connection with persons who could have been connected with the perpetration of the crime. Thus the thieves, Rudzinsky, Singayevsky and Latischeff had also been implicated. There had been rumors to the effect that the boy Andriusha had known all the secrets of the band and had been threatened by them with violence in case of his betraying them. There was a possibility, because of that, of them having done away with him. Tchebiriak had also been suspected since Andriusha had often been seen in her house.

In reading all this, I felt rather pleased. Thus far, the investigation seemed to be on the right track. I began to hope the indictment would not be so terrible after all. In reading further, however, I could see a complete change in the story.

All this had taken place in the beginning. That is,

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the investigation had shared those views at first, but later . . . all this had given place to a new version. The investigation, according to the wording of the indictment, was brought to the conclusion that the "gentlemen" Singayefsky, Rudzinsky (who, by the way, were notorious murderers and thieves in the neighborhood) were simply paragons of virtue. The same high recommendation was extended to Tchebiriak. She also had been the "purest of the pure". Yustchinsky's mother had been cleared sometime before, and really, how could such a calumny be leveled against so "perfect a mother".

In short, they were all decent, honest people, and simply could not have been charged with such an abominable crime. The real culprit, according to the indictment, was a Jew, Mendel Beilis, the manager of Zaitzev's brick factory. It was I who was selected for the role of Yustchinsky's murder. Truly, I had been living on the factory grounds for a number of years, without ever having hurt or molested anybody. But it really did not matter, for I had not murdered Andriusha for personal reasons, such as robbery or the like. I murdered him for religious purposes. There was a little hitch in this, however, for according to the indictment itself a "Tzadick" or a rabbi, or a "good Jew" was needed for that. I, of course, was no Tzadick, but was made such for the purposes of the indictment. A number of queer stories were invented to make me appear the murderer.

At the time, continued the indictment, when the Journalist Brushkovsky had found new facts and turned them over to Colonel Ivanoff, suspicion had turned again to Tchebiriak. One of her neighbors, a Russian woman, Molietzky, who lived in the lower story of the same house, was said to depose that she heard a child's screams coming from the

story occupied by Tchebiriak, and that on the day of Andriusha's disappearance.

But how could they say such evil things about Tchebiriak? Who could believe it? Why, didn't she herself tell the story of her relations with Brushkovsky, who had taken her for a trip to Kharkov for a conference with an "important person"; and had not that person offered Tchebiriak forty thousand dollars if only she would take upon herself the guilt of the murder. The "person" was said to be nobody else than my lawyer, Mr. Arnold Margolin. So Tchebiriak averred. Of course, she indignantly rejected the tempting offer. She could not be bought with money. Hence it was clearer than daylight that Tchebiriak was innocent.

No less clear was the policy of the authorities. All the thieves and villains were to be whitewashed. The journalist Brushkovsky who had a spotless name and Captain Krassovsky were not to be believed. Tchebiriak was given full credence.

In order to bring plausible charges against me, a Jew, it was necessary therefore, to make the crime a ritual one. Hence, it became imperative to base the charges upon expert opinion of learned Christians, who were to declare positively that the Jews used blood for Passover.

I could not read further at the time. My nerves were shattered and I was exhausted. I fell on my cot. In the morning, I began to read the precious document further.

Just where were the assertions and implications of the expert opinions given by the scientists? The indictment had it all clear. Yustchinsky had been murdered in a very unusual manner. Rumors began to circulate at once that the Jews had done it for religious purposes. The investigation authorities therefore were justified in asking for

THE STORY OF MY SUFFERINGS

expert opinions in order to clarify the situation. For this information they turned to Professor Sikorsky of Kiev University, to the professors at the Theological Academy in Kiev, to Glagoliev, and to Professors of similar subjects in the Academy of Petrograd, among them Troyitzky, as well as to the "Master of Religious Sciences", the Rev. Proneitis.

The question put to Professor Sikorsky could not probably be equalled in all court history. He was asked whether it was possible to express an opinion as to what nation the murderer belonged. And what motives had actuated him the crime. Though the question was most astounding, the great scientist, who by the way was a Professor of Psychiatry, and himself somewhat unbalanced — was not abashed by it. He gave a "scientific" answer, to the effect that the crime had been committed deliberately and by a Jew for the purposes of racial vengeance, to "avenge the Children of Israel". The Professor averred that the murder had been well thought out. No insane person could have perpetrated it. The murderers had not gone straight for the heart. Their aim was not to accelerate the death, but to obtain their special ends, that is, to draw blood and to inflict torture. The professor laid down three points, distinct phases of the murder, the drawing of the blood, the infliction of torture, and the actual murder. That was why Andriusha had been stabbed so many times. The Professor further opined that the deed was committed by one "used to that kind of work".

Such was Sikorsky's version.

Crazy as all that expert opinion was, even on the surface, it was accepted by the authorities as valid. The two other professors, Glagoliev and Troyitzky who were the most prominent Russian authorities on the Bible and

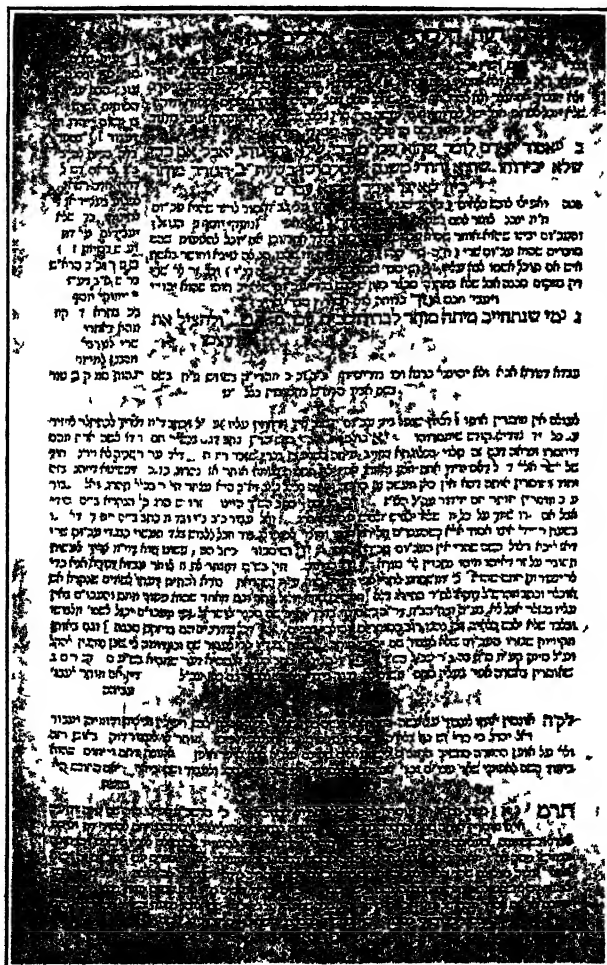
חולין ו' [5-11] ו' [1-7]

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ותגובלה כדו החרוץ ומקד ושחשכו נכר. פסור מלכותו. ויגשש לשבת ויבטל
המפוסרין אל פ' שמונתים בנפשו מיו. ויחשבה אל הדין הדין יחייב ללכותו.
והשטות בפסוקה פניו קטעו ללכת אל הדין הדין יחייב ללכותו. אל פ' מי
אמרו לא וישטו את פסוקה אליו אל פ' הדין לא יער פסוקה ויגדו את
אלהם בדרך שמונתים אל כדו ויגשש אל ויגשו אל פסוקה ויגשש ויגשש
אל הדין יחייב ללכות פסוקה ויגשש אל הדין הדין יחייב ללכות ויגשש
פסור מלכותו מיטן דיוות חילין ללכותו. וישטוהו עיל הכדו ויגדו עיל הכדו
ללכותו בן שטותן. בן נפילאין אל הדין ויגשש אל הדין בן שטותן. ללכותו
יגדוהו אחר מלכותו בן נפילאין אל פ' מלכותו אל פ' מלכותו. ויגשש
המלכות אל הדין עיל הכדו ויגשש אל הדין יחייב ללכותו אל פ' מלכותו אל פ' מלכותו
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על בן הדין ויגשש אל כדו מלכותו בן נפילאין ויגשש אל כדו ויגשש אל כדו
כל הדין שטות בן נפילאין אל כדו ויגשש אל כדו ויגשש אל כדו ויגשש אל כדו

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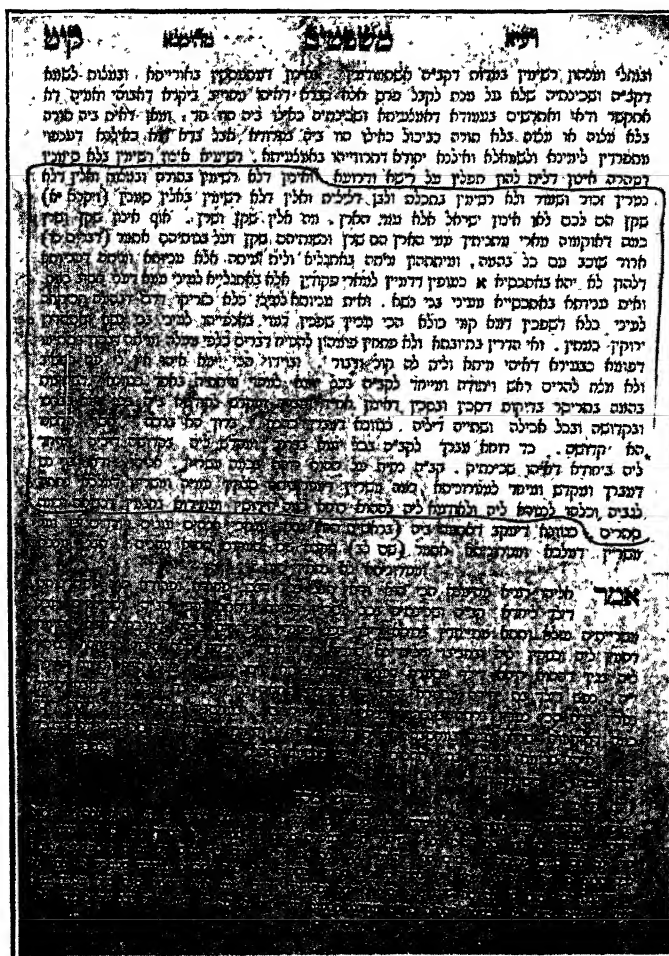
Text of Talmud formed the basis of the anti-Semitic charges against Beilis and the Jewish people



Text of Yore Deah formed the basis of the anti Semitic charges against Beilis and the Jewish people

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Text of Zohar formed the basis of the anti-Semitic charges against Beilis and the Jewish people

Talmud were asked questions about Jewish laws and rites. Glagoliev answered that there does not exist in Jewish literature any law or custom allowing Jews to use blood, or Christian blood, especially, for religious purposes. He stated further that the prohibition against shedding human blood or using any blood whatsoever, was to be found in the Bible, and insofar as he knew was never retracted or abolished in any later writings. He did not find any specific prohibition to that effect in the Talmud or in the rabbinical laws.

Professor Troyitzky was also quoted as having said that the Jews were forbidden by their religious laws to use blood, also that they were strictly forbidden to murder any human being whether Jew or non-Jew. The expressions: "A Gentile studying the Torah is subject to death" and "Murder the good among the Gentiles" are to be found in the Talmudic laws, but he found it difficult to explain them. He knows of no proper explanation. In summing up, the Professor stated that both the law and the Talmud prohibited Jews from using blood in general, and human blood in particular. As regards the Cabbala, he was unable to express any opinion. He was unacquainted with the Cabbalistic literature, and did not know what, if anything, was said there about the usage of blood.

Hence it was becoming necessary for the indictment to turn to a Cabbalist, to the great authority on the subject, the ex-Catholic priest, Proneitis. This was quite interesting. The greatest Russian authorities, Glagoliev and Troyitzky, distinguished professors at the highest theological academies, expressed themselves rather in my favor. That is, they explicitly stated that the Jews were forbidden to use any blood, human blood especially. Hence it seemed there could be no "ritual" in the case. But if there were

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no ritual, all the accusations leveled against me would fall to the ground. This, of course, the authorities did not like. They therefore began to tackle the Cabbala. They searched high and low among professional clergymen but could not find anyone bold enough to say he knew the Cabbala.

Finally, a certain priest Proneitis, whose name had not been known to anybody declared that he knew it all, the Talmudic as well as the Cabbalistic literature, and the great Cabbalist gave it as his expert opinion that: "All the Jewish rabbis and Jews in general are united in their hatred of the Christians. A Gentile is considered to be a "beast harmful to men". Hence the explanation of the prohibition against murdering the alien. The prohibition, according to the priest, referred to the Jews alone, as only they were considered human. It did not refer to Christians who were considered beasts.

Having done with the Talmud, the learned priest took up the Cabbala. He held that: "The murder had to be committed in a specific manner as prescribed by the Cabbala. Blood had a great part in the Jewish religion. It was used as a remedy in many diseases". When blood was needed, it was not necessary to cut the victim's throat. But to stab the victim, to draw its blood out. The opinion that the Jews were actually forbidden to use blood was wrong, according to the priest. Even the Talmud likened blood to water, milk, etc. Proneitis then proceeded to enumerate a number of "scientists" and swindlers like himself, quoting their statements in regard to the question. He laid particular emphasis on the opinion of a certain renegade—formerly a rabbi, afterwards a priest—to the effect that the Jews could eat cooked blood. The renegade was alleged to have stated that Christian blood was good for eye diseases. Such

EXPERTS AND WITNESSES FOR THE DEFENSE



RABBI MAZE
Expert for the Defense



Prof W. M. BACHTEREV
Expert for the Defense



Prof. A. I. KARPINSKY
Expert for the Defense



Prof. O. O. KADIAN
Expert for the Defense



Prof. I. G. TROYITZKI
Expert for the Defense



PAVLOV, the Czar's Surgeon
Expert for the Defense



NAKONETCHNY
Witness for the Defense

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were the discoveries made by Proneitis in the renegade's name.

It is curious to observe that the renegade never said he knew these things himself. He declared that his father had told him so, taking the son's oath never to divulge the secret. While the renegade had been a Jew, he had kept the secret. Having changed his religion, he wanted to announce these things to the world.

The indictment was not satisfied with all this rigmarole. Its compilers turned back at this point, and told of certain evidence given by various persons. Tchebiriak's boy, Zhenia, was alleged to have testified that he had seen strange Jews, Tzadikim, in my house. I did not know whether Zhenia actually said so, for the boy had died in the meanwhile. However, his nine-year-old sister corroborated his story. They said that having once gone to Beilis, in order to buy milk, they had noticed through the window, two strange looking Jews, in funny hats and black robes. The children were said to have become frightened and ran away.

Furthermore, on the day of Yustchinsky's disappearance, the girl said, she, with some other children, had been playing in the factory yard. Beilis started to chase them out and they all ran and climbed over a fence to safety. She had hidden herself to see what Beilis would do. Thereupon she saw Beilis and the two Jews catch Andriusha Yustchinsky and drag him into the house. Among other stories, there was also mentioned the story of my letter sent through Kozachenko to my family. The spy Kozachenko had quite a lively imagination.

He testified that having gained my confidence, he persuaded me to write a letter and in doing so, I told him many secrets. I was said to have asked him to do

EXPERTS AND WITNESSES FOR THE PROSECUTION



PSICHIATOR SIKORSKY
Expert for the Prosecution



Prof. KOSTOROTOV
Expert for the Prosecution



Student GOLUBEV
Expert for the Prosecution



N. Z. ZAMISLOVSKY
Private Complainant



PRIEST PRANAITIS
Expert for the Prosecution

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a job for me, once he was out of prison: to poison two "bad" witnesses. I promised him plenty of money. I was supposed to promise him great remuneration from the "Jewish people". As a deposit, he was to be given fifty rubles and the required poison. If he were to do a good job, he was to be provided for the rest of his life.

The sum total of it was that I, in conspiracy with some unknown men who had not been discovered, had premeditated and committed the murder of a Christian child for religious purposes. For this purpose, we had taken Yustchinsky, gagged his mouth, and inflicted thirty-seven wounds on his head, neck, and other parts, and had then drawn out his blood.

These events took place in the month of March. Pacing my cell I would often take out that document, most inappropriately called a Court Indictment, and read it again and again, till the blood would almost freeze in my veins. I was helpless. The whole of Black Russia, with Czar Nicholas at its head, willed it so.

While being presented with the second indictment, I was asked once more whom I was retaining as my lawyer. I answered that I wished to retain my former attorney. A while later I was visited by Mr. Barsky. He told me that Mr. Margolin had withdrawn from the defense, because the Prosecuting Attorney had summoned him as a witness. The law forbade one to be a witness and lawyer in the same case.

Mr. Barsky told me further that besides him and Gruzenberg, I would also be defended by Messrs. Maklakov and Karabchevsky. Some time later, I received another visit from Mr. Barsky. We spoke little of the case. He always told me to keep my courage and strength. He felt certain that the truth would rise, like oil upon

water, and the Black Hundreds and anti-Semites would meet with ignominious defeat. He told me also to ask the Prosecuting Attorney for a second copy of the indictment. That was my right. My lawyers needed that copy. I sent a petition to the Prosecuting Attorney for the second copy.

Next morning, Mashkevitch appeared in prison.

"Do you really wish to have a copy of the whole preliminary investigation", he inquired.

"Yes, I must have it".

"If you insist you shall have it, but I must tell you that it may make things worse for you. It may delay the date for trial for another few months".

I asked why Fenenko had given me a copy without any quibbles.

He laughed at me.

"You are foolish. Fenenko was a child. He believed all the stories you told him. Don't you compare me to Fenenko. He had drawn up an indictment that was good for nothing, while I made it to the point. Anyhow, if you wish to have the trial delayed, you may have another copy".

I was in a desperate dilemma. If I were not to have another copy my lawyers would be unable to make a thorough study of the indictment in time. They would be unable to prepare their pleas or to get to the very heart of the prosecution's arguments. Were I, on the other hand, to get a copy the date of trial would be postponed, and I had waited so long for that trial with so much impatience. It was possible that Mashkevitch was just trying to give me a fright. But then again he might have told the truth. If he wanted to put any diffi-

THE STORY OF MY SUFFERINGS

culties in the way, he was quite able to do so. His policy clearly was to inflict all possible suffering upon me.

Upon some pondering over the matter I decided not to ask for a copy. I believed that my lawyers would know how to get along without it. They would know how to obtain a copy. They had more chances of getting one than a helpless prisoner. Meanwhile, I would gain at least that much: that the trial would not be delayed. A few days later, I was told that my wife and brother were coming to see me in the Warden's office. This rendezvous was the only consolation I had during my imprisonment.

Entering the office, I saw my wife and brother sitting there. Mashkevitch was also present. I began to ask them questions about the state of things in the family. One of the questions asked by my brother was: "Have you received a copy of the indictment"?

I told him that I had been informed that the process of trial would be delayed for another few months if I were to get that copy. Because of that I decided to dispense with the copy. My brother became angry and told me: "You mustn't listen to all these stories. Get a copy and pay no attention to these stories".

The Warden, who was present, throughout the time of our conversation, jumped to his feet and turned to my brother with a shout:

"Get out of here at once. What impudence"!

It was a long time before the Warden regained his composure. He was pacing the floor, and mumbling: "What insolence, what impudence". Thereupon, he ordered my wife to withdraw from his office, too. I expected after that to hear that my brother had been arrested for his boldness, and I spent a few sleepless nights because of the worry.

A few days later my wife came again for a visit. This time it was in the prison office, so we could talk only through a double grating. She told me, however, that my brother had not been arrested.

It was with the greatest impatience that I waited for that much longed-for trial. Two and a half years had elapsed from that fatal day when the chief of the Kiev Okhrana, Kuliabko, had arrested me at my house. Kuliabko meanwhile had gone to his ruin, in part through his own fault. The well-known revolutionist and half-traitor, Bogrov, had managed to penetrate into the theatre at a time when Czar Nicholas had come to visit Kiev. It was there that Bogrov had assassinated the Prime Minister, Stolipin, in the presence of the Czar. Kuliabko's career thus came to a short and disastrous end. It did not, however, improve my situation a bit.

Now, at last, the great day was approaching. That day which not only I and my family, but the whole Jewish nation, were breathlessly waiting for all these years. Nay, the whole world, even many Gentiles were waiting for it, for all wished to know the truth, wished to know how the Russian people would decide my fate, as well as the fate of the Jewish nation.

I knew that I was to be defended by the greatest lawyers of Russia. I knew that the best elements of the Russian people were siding with me, with the truth, but what aid could the people render me? The situation depended not so much on the whole people as on the judges and the government. In such a case, the ultimate issue and verdict hung, so to speak, on a hair. It could be swayed by a mood, by a caprice. What was it going to be? However, I firmly hoped that the bubble of lies would burst and this gave me courage.

THE STORY OF MY SUFFERINGS

CHAPTER XIX

THE TRIAL AT LAST

Hard as it was to have spent over two years in prison, without definitely knowing what I was being accused of, it was harder still to await the great day when I would be put on the dock before the judges, that is, the day when the whole conspiracy was at last to explode.

"But as long as we live, we live to see it", says the proverb.

One day I received formal summons to appear for trial on the 25th of September. There were still over two months to be spent in anxious waiting. But the shore was at last in view; with every passing day I was coming nearer to the longed-for end. Another few days and all would be over. My joy was intense. I pictured to myself the procedure and incidents of the trial, the reading of the indictment, the questions I would be asked, and my answers to them. All my thoughts were concentrated on the approaching trial. I could not think of anything else. About two weeks before the trial, I began to petition the authorities for permission to have my own clothes which had been taken away from me when brought into the jail, when I had to exchange my clothes for the usual prisoner's garb. I did it because I was actually ashamed to appear at the trial in the prisoner's royal raiments.

I received no answer, however, to my earnest petition. Two or three days before the trial I was visited by my

wife and brother. Of course, tears were rather plentiful and we were wishing each other to meet again in the near future in my own home, free and unmolested.

Before leaving, my wife told me that I was to be permitted to have my own clothes, and that they would be issued to me on that very day. The next morning, the thirteen locks of my cell began to click, preliminary to the opening. Usually, their opening filled me with apprehension and fear. This time they seemed to have a different sound. They were clicking more encouragingly as if bringing good news.

"Well", said the guard "here are your clothes, dress yourself. Today your trial begins".

I was brought into another room where I was given my suit of clothes, etc., that had been taken from me two and a half years ago. I was real happy in being able to discard the ugly prisoner's clothes and to put on my own. I did not want to think at the moment that I might be putting them on for the last time. I was satisfied to be able, at least for one day, to appear like other human beings.

On that day, the authorities treated me with the greatest friendliness. All their former viciousness disappeared as if by magic. Some of them even helped me to put on my clothes. I could not imagine such politeness on their part after all the suffering they had subjected me to. When I was in readiness, I was handed over to the escorting squad. And even the prison escort behaved differently. Forward march! was the command given.

As we came out of the prison yard, a pleasant sight awaited me. Previously each time I had been conducted to the Prosecuting Attorney, there was no one in the yard except for a few guards. This time the yard was packed

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as if a great military review was on. A regular army; all the administration was there in full force. From the lowest guard to the warden himself, all were looking at me. I was the center of attention. Some of them smiled under the moustache; the majority were stiff and serious. Besides these, there were several hundred Cossacks in the yard. Their lances were glistening and the naked sabres were all an indication that they had come to protect me from an "evil eye". I was seated in the black armored prison coach, which was surrounded by the whole army of officials and cavalry; and with all this pomp and grandeur was escorted on the road to the Court of Justice.

From the window of my coach I could see that the streets were lined with people. The weather was far from propitious. It was very cloudy and it looked as if the heavens did not view the whole spectacle favorably. The crowds did not heed the weather. The Black Hundreds, who could be distinguished by their badges, were present in large numbers. I could see their ugly faces, popping up at every turn of the road. On the pavements, in the windows, and even on the roofs of the houses, one could see multitudes of people.

During my progress I noticed Jewish faces, men and women, some wringing their hands, and wiping their tears with their handkerchiefs. I also did my share of the crying.

Along the whole road, from the prison to the court, a distance of about two miles, a line of Cossacks on horseback stretched out, in order to insure order, and probably to watch me. Passing through the cordon we finally reached the District Court House which was surrounded by thousands of People. The gates of the courtyard swung open and our coach drove in. Alighting from it,

I said to the driver with a smile: "I shall pay you on my way back". The Chief of Police and a police captain who were standing near by could not refrain from laughing.

In the Court, I was led into a separate room, specially assigned to the prisoners under trial. I was impatiently waiting to be led into the courtroom. I had been waiting for so long a time for that day. Now that it had come I could hardly believe my sense that it had not all been a dream.

All those months and years passed before me as if in review: Kuliabko dragging me away from my family, the Okhrana, the District Attorney, the Tzadikim, the Afikomon, the prison, the days of hunger, the nights of sleeplessness, the guards, the swollen feet, the operation, the surgeon cutting endlessly and mercilessly, Fenenko, Mashkevitch, the General and that lady, and all those endless tortures. My God, when was it all going to end?



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CHAPTER XX

KARABCHEVSKY

The door of the room opened and a distinguished, athletic-looking man, with a flowing mane of hair came in and greeted me. I started as if awakening from a night-mare and looked at that handsome and friendly, smiling face.

"Good morning, Mr. Beilis. Don't be alarmed. I am your lawyer Karabchevsky", he said.

I had known that he was to be one of my lawyers at the trial, but I had seen only Messrs. Grigorovitch-Barsky, Gruzenberg, Zarudny and Margolin. They often came to visit me in the prison. The two others, Messrs. Maklakoff and Karabchevsky I had not seen before the trial.

The sudden appearance of the latter made a strong impression upon me. It was as if a strong light had penetrated the room. His friendly greeting, his cheerful tone, not only liberated me from the nightmare of my thoughts, but made me feel as if I was to be liberated at once from my very imprisonment.

The famous advocate came closer and said: "Be of good cheer, Mr. Beilis. Keep your courage up. I should be happy to come nearer to you and to shake hands with you. Unfortunately, in your case, an exceptional rule has been laid down, and even we, your lawyers, cannot approach you nearer than within four steps' distance. And it is

not impossible that were I to break that rule I should be severely reprimanded. How do you feel, how have you been”?

His cordial and friendly words had so strong an effect upon me that I forgot that I was a prisoner. I felt as if I were a free man surrounded by friends. But a look at my escorts who were ceaselessly watching my every movement made me realize that I was still very much in their clutches.

I began feeling hungry and wanted a smoke too. I therefore addressed myself to Karabchevsky:

“I should like, first of all, to be permitted to smoke and also to be given something to eat. I shall be completely starved, if I am to wait till food is brought from the prison. I have money, and could buy food from the court-restaurant”.

While I was thus speaking, the colonel who was in charge of the escort came into the room. Karabchevsky turned to the colonel:

“Why is it that this man is not allowed to smoke”?

The colonel answered sharply: “Because prisoners must not smoke”.

“That may be so”, replied Karabchevsky, “but this man is not a prisoner. Besides that, he must be given something to eat. The trial which is about to begin will be a long and trying one. He will need every bit of his strength. It is a serious matter. I therefore earnestly beg of you to grant Beilis the two things he is asking for. If you do not grant him that—perhaps it is not in your power, but that does not matter—I shall be compelled to tell it to the public during the trial. Not many should be submitted to such privations, and especially a man like him”.

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Karabchevsky's words made quite an impression on the colonel. He realized at once that he was not dealing with a depressed Jew, Mendel Beilis, but with the great Russian lawyer, Karabchevsky. And Karabchevsky's threat to tell all the public at the trial must also have made its impression. The Colonel then requested to be given a few minutes to communicate with higher authority about the matter, because the problem was no ordinary one, and he could not take the responsibility upon himself alone.

In the very act of leaving the room, the Colonel turned around and said to the escort: "Well, he may smoke at any rate".

"If so", said Karabtchevsky to the escorting soldier, "go and bring him cigarettes". He pulled out a three ruble bill and gave it to the soldier. The soldier returned in a few minutes with some excellent cigarettes. Karabchevsky looked very pleased that he was at once able to obtain for me the privilege and the pleasure of smoking at my ease, and thus to rout my dark thoughts.

Meanwhile the Colonel returned and announced that the higher authorities, upon deliberation, had also granted me permission to procure my food from the Court-restaurant.

"Well, Mr. Beilis", exclaimed my lawyer, "are you contented now". He added: "If there is anything you may need or want, tell your lawyers about it. We shall certainly do all that is possible to help you. As for yourself, don't lose courage. After all you are not altogether in the hands of your imprisoners. You are in the hands of God, and in ours; and my colleagues are happy to participate in your trial. Of course, I wish to God such trials never had to take place in Russia. We would have been spared so much shame upon the good name of our

country. But since we must go through with it, I want to tell you that it is the greatest honor for us to be able, as we hope, to show the whole world the falsity of the prosecution. You will see for yourself. The truth will emerge victorious. I am taking my leave for a short while. We shall be together again very shortly. Dosvedania”!

Karabchevsky's utterances, coming as they did from so sincere and distinguished a friend, inspired in me strength and confidence. I really felt full of energy and my faith in speedy liberation grew quite firm. The behavior and treatment of my escort soldiers changed rapidly. They became extremely helpful and pleasant. They could not understand, of course, how such persons could speak in the manner they did to a common prisoner. They had never heard anything like it before. Moreover, had not the gentleman intimated that I was not a prisoner at all? Also — the cigarette incident, for which the soldier received a three ruble tip from the lawyer, the tiff with the Colonel in regard to the restaurant food, all had their effect in changing the escort's attitude towards me.

The soldier brought my meal from the restaurant, and every time he was to go to the restaurant, he would solicitously inquire just what dishes I would prefer, for since we were paying money for it, he was quite willing to see to it that I obtained the best and most nourishing food. And all of it was done with cheerfulness and politeness which I had never before encountered in any of the prison soldiers.

Soon, I began feeling considerably better. For one thing, I got the first good real glass of tea I had had for months; and a decent meal made me feel much stronger. However, it was somewhat too early to rejoice. After

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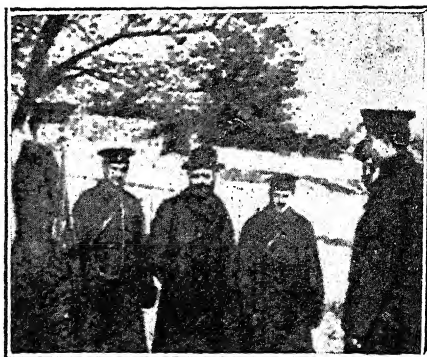
all the past days of suffering, I had to face a good many more, or less trying. And I needed a great deal of energy for the future. It must be said, however, that for a prisoner who had been secluded from the world of the living for long and weary months, even an hour of ease and pleasure is great good fortune in itself. While I was thinking of my fortune, the door was opened and the Colonel shouted abruptly: "Bring the prisoner into the Court room; the trial is about to begin". I repeated that last phrase over and over again.



AT THE TRIAL



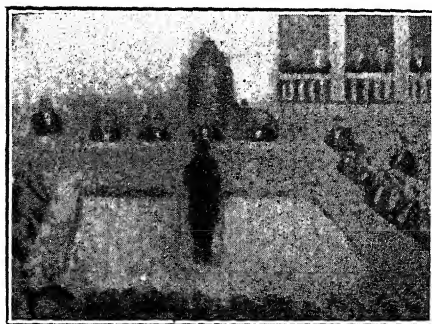
Beilis at the Trial



Beilis Leaves Street Car Under Guard



P. A. BOLDIREV, Presiding
Judge, Kiev Supreme Court



The Sessions of the Kiev Supreme Court



The Jury

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CHAPTER XXI

THE TRIAL BEGINS

I was brought into the large Court Room and was told to sit in the defendant's dock. The soldiers with their swords drawn stood on both sides of me, but I paid no attention to them. Let them watch me if such were their orders. How contented I felt that now the veil of mystery was to be thrown away and those secrets with which the bureaucratic and Black Hundred officials were trying to encompass my ruin were to be bared before the world. I was very strongly impressed by the whole scene attending the opening of the trial. The large Court Room was packed with several thousand spectators, men of all nations and all classes were present. The ladies in splendid toilettes, the well fed general and high officials in glittering uniforms and decorations.

But what impressed me particularly was the presence of the newspaper correspondents from all civilized countries. The District Attorney, the Prosecuting Attorney and some other officials were also standing at the side engaged in an animated conference. The dais was situated in the middle of the room, for the judges and the Presiding Judge.

All these people came to that spectacle, as if to a play, to take part or to satisfy their curiosity. But whether it was they who came to act, or those who came as mere



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CHAPLINSKY
Prosecuting Attorney

spectators, all of them turned their eyes to me at the moment of my entrance into the Court Room.

The jury, the "twelve men, good and true", in whose hands my fate actually lay, made rather an uneasy impression upon me. It was in their hands, that my freedom, life or death, imprisonment or complete liberation, were held. My first impression was that I would lose the trial. I could not believe that such a jury composed of mouzhiks, plain peasants, would be able to understand so complicated a case. If the Jury had been as I expected, educated, scholarly men, I would not have had any fear of the ultimate issue. They would, no doubt, understand everything that was involved. I feared that the mouzhiks would not be able even to understand the arguments of my attorneys. Besides that I knew how easy it was to impose upon so simple a class of people. They have not much of an equipment besides their native wits. They had plenty of fear for the authorities. Therefore I myself was afraid lest it be too easy for the officials to win over the jury with some nice talk, and make them my enemies. The more so that the whole case revolved around a Jew.

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The jury saw on one side Russian generals, high officials resplendent with the Czar's authority delegated to them. The Prosecuting Attorney and his assistants were to be relied upon not to spare any calumny to be heaped on my head. True, on the other side, the jury could see a few Russian lawyers defending me. But would that make any impression upon them? Any defendant can hire advocates to defend him. Besides all this, the Russian peasant is well-known to be gullible, and the wilder the rumor, the more prone he is to believe it.

They were just the kind of people to believe that the Jews used blood for Passover. For all I knew, they might all have shared that belief. If so, it looked as if I were the murderer, but there was nothing to be done. That could not be changed. Trusting in God, we had to await the outcome. I looked at my advocates and the lawyers for the prosecution, Schmakov and Zamislovsky. Scanning the faces of those in the Court Room, I noticed my wife sitting in a remote corner. She sat alone, with her head downcast, with tears in her eyes.

Upon my entrance there had been considerable noise in the Court Room. Many people were holding conversation in loud tones. Some were walking back and forth. Various officials were coming in with their brief cases and reports. The confusion and din impressed one as though an orchestra was tuning up the instruments prior to starting the concert.

There descended at once a complete silence. The Sergeant-at-arms shouted: "Silence, the Court is entering". The public rose from the benches as one man. More officials came in, and immediately it became very quiet and one could hear the least sound, as if all had suspended breathing.

The Presiding Judge, Boldirev, interrupted the silence. He directed himself to me with a question.

"To what religion do you belong"?

I did not recognize my own voice when I answered in something approaching a shout: "I am a Jew".

I noticed that the District Attorney and the lawyer for the prosecution, Schmakov, exchanged smiles when I exclaimed that I was a Jew. Immediately thereupon the lawyers of both sides were involved in a controversy. The Presiding Judge asked my lawyers whether they objected to the fact that the prosecution lawyers were seated so near to the jury. Karabchevsky immediately answered: "Yes, we are most emphatically against that. They are sitting too close to the jurymen, and every word of theirs is liable to prejudice the jurymen".

The prosecution attempted to deny that, but they were over-ruled.

The administering of the oath to the witnesses then began. This was no trifling matter. One hundred and thirty-five witnesses for the defense were summoned and thirty-five for the prosecution, making a total of one hundred and seventy witnesses. The witnesses were then sworn in. The silence heretofore prevailing in the Court Room was disturbed and a general hubbub began once more.

In coming up to take their oaths, the witnesses had to pass by me. All my witnesses, in doing so, greeted me in a friendly manner. Even a number of those summoned by the Prosecution looked upon me and greeted me. This procedure lasted throughout the day and was not over until late at night. I sat all the time as if nailed to my seat, and was near to fainting from boredom and exhaustion. When the swearing in of the witnesses was completed, I was carried back to the prison in the black coach.

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During all the time of my imprisonment, I had slept practically on the bare floor and nobody had ever thought of making it any more comfortable for me. Just the reverse, very often they tried to make it harder.

Now, I was pleasantly surprised upon coming into my cell, to see it looking quite different than usual. There was a cot with a neat mattress. All the guards acted like old friends. I could hardly recognize them. I could not fathom the reasons for their change of heart. Did they begin to feel that I would presently be liberated and the whole bubble of lies would burst? But could they have changed when the trial had barely begun?

Apparently, it was an order from their superiors that whatever the ultimate issue, I should be treated in a milder manner for the time being. I thanked God for that. Let us accept an hour of relief, be it even one hour. Tired out with the excitement of the day, I threw myself upon the cot and fell asleep.



CHAPTER XXII

THE TESTIMONY OF DIVERS WITNESSES

The next morning, I was escorted to the Court House with the same pomp and ceremony by squads of cavalry and gendarmes, acting as escort of honor. The Court Room was as well packed as on the day before, but the tension was greater this time, and the audience displayed more evidence of nervousness. For yesterday, it was only a formal ceremony of administering the oaths, but today was to begin the true drama, the real spectacle.

The examination of the witnesses began. The first to be called upon were the carters and drivers who had been carting the bricks from the factory. These witnesses were to testify to a very important circumstance which played a large part in the trial. The lamplighter at the factory, Schakhovsky, had testified to the Prosecuting Attorney, and it had been inserted in the indictment, that on Saturday, March 12, at 9 A.M., he had seen me standing in my house with two Tzadikim who were dressed in their long kaftans and skull caps, wrapped in the Talethim and absorbed in prayer. After prayers, I was alleged to have chased and caught Yustchinsky in the yard, and to have carried him away to the kiln where the bricks were baked. He did not know what had taken place further. From his testimony, it would seem quite clear that Andriusha had not come out of my hands alive. Schakhovsky also testified that there was no one around the factory at the time, not even the workers.

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The same story had been told to Fenenko by Tchebiriak's little boy, Zhenia. When the Prosecutor had asked me at the time what I had to say in regard to Schakovsky's testimony, I had exclaimed that there is a receipt book and system operating at the factory. The receipts showed who the drivers and carters had been upon that day, to whom the bricks had been delivered, with the signature in each case of the carter who loaded and delivered the bricks to the customers. The books showed that on March the 12th, ten thousand bricks had been delivered and that fifty drivers and carters had been engaged throughout the day in that work. It was preposterous therefore, for anybody to say that there was nobody in the factory yard on that day, and that I had no other work but to chase after Yustchinsky. One of the drivers gave the following answer:

"We were always at the factory. We even slept there. Beilis lived on the upper story, we lived in the lower on. Besides that, we know well that Beilis is an honest man".

Another driver said, "Beilis used to get up very early, about three in the morning. When we used to knock at his door he was always ready. He was very faithful to his employer and used to watch us pretty closely to see that we also got up early and went to work. He very often left his meals in the middle and would come over to see that we were not loafing. He never remained alone for an hour. All of us Russians were always around whether by day or by night".

These simple and clear statements by plain peasants made a strong impression. After the drivers, a woman — a complete stranger to me — was called up for testimony.

Asked by the presiding judge whether she knew me, she gave the following answer:

"Yes, sir, I know him — it is through Beilis that my family happiness has been ruined. I lost my husband because of Beilis. My husband had been a locksmith and he was short of some piece of metal which he could not procure elsewhere. He noticed a suitable piece of metal at Zaitzeff's factory, and thinking that Zaitzeff was very rich and would not notice the loss of that piece, he took or stole the thing he wanted. However, Beilis did not let the thing go and brought charges against my husband. My husband was imprisoned, became infected with typhus in jail and died there in a short while. Nevertheless, I call Beilis an honest man. He did his duty, he was true to his employer".

In this manner the court summoned one witness after the other and these were shattering the indictment and the charges with their testimony. There could be no better proof for those who were really interested in getting at the truth than the testimony which these plain people were giving. Of course, there remained the question, how the jury would take that testimony. After these witnesses, a Pole by the name of Vissimirsky, a man of over sixty years, came up before the judges. He was a neighbor of mine and lived in the third house from my own. His statements produced a powerful impression and throughout his testimony the audience in the courtroom sat in perfect silence as if fascinated. When he finished, however, there arose quite a hub-bub. This Vissimirsky had been trading in cattle. Every time I needed a cow I used to buy it from him. He was a frequent visitor in my house and knew everything in connection with my family since he came practically every day. This Vissimirsky knew that at the

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time of the murder I happened to have no cow at all. His testimony to that effect was a blow to the prosecution, since it showed the falsity of Vera Tchebiriak as well as of her children who testified that they had come to my house on the 12th of March to buy milk from me. This is why Fenenko at the first interrogation had asked me whether I had a cow, and whether I sold milk. Vissimirsky stated most emphatically that all the stories about the cow and the milk were absolutely false since he knew positively that I had no cow throughout that whole year. When he finished his testimony he still remained standing before the judges as if absorbed in thought. It was clear he wanted to add something. The audience was, as the saying goes, "all eyes and ears" and a deaf silence reigned in the court room. What was he going to say? What did the old gentile wish to tell? And why was he thinking so long, why was he hesitating?

I myself felt quite uneasy. As to the cow, he testified the truth, but I was not sure what else he had to say. Suddenly he interrupted the silence.

"I have something more to say", he proceeded very slowly. "I had not known I would be called as a witness — what have I to do with courts and trials and such things? I am an old man with one foot in the grave. During all my life I have never been in court, whether as defendant or as witness, and I expected to end my peaceful life without having anything to do with courts, but lately I received the summons to come here — well, let it be so. What can I say? For the last two and a half years I have been ill on account of this case. It seems to me that it is likely to shorten my days. I have but one son who is very dear to me — because of him I would not do anything ungodly or dishonest. Besides that I am under oath and I believe

in God and fear Him. Because of that I feel I cannot keep silent and must tell all that I know in connection with this trial. All that I have told you about the cow is proof sufficient how false the charges against Beilis are. But I am going to tell you more which will put an end to all tales that Mendel Beilis is a murderer—that he could have murdered Andriusha Yustchinsky, or that he needed blood for the Passover Matzohs. I am telling you all these charges are false from the beginning to the very end”.

The silence in the courtroom was charged with intensity. The man stopped for a minute and apparently was gathering all his courage. He turned again to the judges and spoke in a straightforward solemn manner. “I myself come from the city of Vitebsk. I had been the manager of an estate in the vicinity of that city. I had an assistant, a dear friend of mine and co-religionist by the name of Ravitch. Some time later, both of us had to migrate to the city of Kiev, where we settled and lived near one another, and that happened to be quite close to Tchebiriak’s house. The Favitch couple had no children, they lived in peace—were very nice people and led an honorable life. He kept a grocery store and made a fine living. Thus several years elapsed. One day Mr. and Mrs. Ravitch came to me and told me they must bid me farewell for they were going abroad. I was amazed! How was it they were leaving the city and suddenly at that. What was the matter? They were making out so well and were respected. What was the reason for leaving good friends and a profitable business and going to the other end of the world—for he told me he was emigrating to America.

Mrs. Ravitch commenced to weep. I was deeply

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moved for I knew something was wrong. With tears in her eyes Mrs. Ravitch told me, "We must go to America".

"Why must you? Why is it you are leaving all of a sudden to face hardships in a new land. Have you friends or relatives there"?

She wept the more. Ravitch himself was sitting in silence and would not utter a word. I saw there was something oppressing their mind and soul which they would not tell. I begged her to tell me whether anything had happened.

"I am a good old friend of yours. You must not conceal anything from me".

She said, "My dear friend, I know I can tell you the truth, but I implore you not to repeat my words to anybody if you don't want to endanger our lives. Will you promise me"?

"Yes, I will promise", I said, "but tell me the truth".

This is what she told me: "We have been quite friendly all the time with Vera Tchebiriak—you know we are neighbors. She would come frequently to get a loan of something, sometimes I myself would go to ask her for something,—a pot or some other utensil. One morning I came into her house to ask for a chopping knife. I was so friendly with her that I knew where all these things were. I found Vera in bed, so I myself went to the kitchen to get the chopping knife. No sooner I entered into the next room than I saw, to my utmost horror, a dead child lying in the bath-tub. I was frightened out of my senses. I grabbed hold of the chopper and fled the place. Apparently Vera noticed that I must have observed something, and she also became frightened".

The witness stopped once more—he spoke as if with difficulty, and had to stop every few minutes. In the

courtroom there was a wave of whispering and movement. The witness renewed the testimony.

"A few days later—I am telling you Mrs. Ravitch's story—Vera Tchebiriak came to see me (that is the Mrs. Ravitch), and told me in a few sharp precise words: 'Look here Ravitch, I am mighty sorry of course, that you saw the child, but it cannot be helped now—there is only one way out of it, you must leave Russia for good. If you stay here you will have to leave this world altogether'. I said to her, 'Little sister mine, what is it you are saying? Why should I leave the country? Where shall I go? and what for?' She told me, 'I will give you the travelling expense to go to America—I know you would not squeal, but the spies will start nosing around, they will summon you to the P. A. and they will nag and question you, twist you back and forth and in the end they will catch you and you will tell the truth. The best thing, therefore, is for you to disappear'. Well, what was I to do? I had to say I would consent and would leave Russia. Now I am coming to bid you farewell, and in truth", and in truth gentlemen of the court, in a few days, they left for America, for New York".¹

A veritable storm arose in the court when Vissimirsky ended his testimony. Vera Tchebiriak who was sitting there as a witness bedecked in all finery with a gay hat, a "real lady", was near fainting. She clearly became very agitated, was saying something and gesticulating frantically with her hands. The presiding Judge Boldirev, who was apparently in quite friendly relations with Tchebiriak tried to quiet her and instead of calling her Mrs. Tchebiriak, or witness, as the official regulations called for, was calling her Vera Vladimirovna, as if she had been a prominent

¹ When I first came to New York and Mr. Ravitch became aware of my arrival, he was one of the first to come to see me in the hotel.

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person or a close friend of his. Those of the audience who were sitting close to her began to move away and long kaftans and skull caps, wrapped in the Talethim and shun her as if she inspired them with fear. All this scene made, as I could well see, quite an impression upon the jury. When Vera Tchebiriak saw all that, she took the gay hat off and threw a shawl over her head so as to shield herself somewhat and to make herself less recognizable. She was white as a sheet, and was visibly trembling. The presiding judge, who was apparently quite shaken himself, directed himself to the witness.

"If you knew all that you are saying now for so long a time, why did you keep silent to this day"?

Said the witness, "I did not think I would be called upon as a witness. I believed the truth would come out by itself — I will tell you more. I tried my religion. I kept silent in order to see whether we have a righteous God in the world — if there is a God then the truth would surely come out".

It was clear the presiding judge did not intend to have the witness prolong his testimony. He was too good for the accused and the judge wanted to get rid of the witness.

The next witness was a ten year old boy. His story was a new blow, not only at the indictment, but also at Vera Tchebiriak. I must remark here that it happened several times during the trial that not only was I being defended, but what was more, the witnesses declared themselves openly as being perfectly certain that it was Vera Tchebiriak who had committed the murder. The grim humor of the situation was in the fact that she was summoned as a witness against me. The boy cast a glance

at me and began to smile. The presiding judge asked him, "Do you know Mendel Beilis?"

"Yes, I know him".

"Had he ever chased you from the factory?"

"I never had to be chased, and it was not up to Beilis to do that he had other business to attend to. They had a janitor (a dvornik) to chase us".

That question was asked several times for the prosecution was trying to prove that I was in the habit of chasing Christian children from the factory yards, and that I had caught and made a victim of Andriusha.

"Yes", continued the boy, "we used to play around the factory, but Yustchinsky was never there and Beilis never chased us from the factory". He added further: "Before you called me here I was sitting near Vera Tchebiriak and she said to me, 'Look here, boy, don't forget to say that Andriusha Yustchinsky had been playing at the factory yard with you boys — it's a long time ago, and perhaps you have forgotten it'. And I told her, 'Why should you teach me what I am to say? You are teaching me to tell lies — Andriusha never played around the factory, and I am telling the truth". I could see by the expression of their faces that the jury was moved by the boy's words. Veritchka, or as the presiding judge was calling her Vera Vladimirovna, was every moment faring from bad to worse. My witnesses did not conceal their belief that it was she who had murdered the boy Andriusha.

A series of important witnesses were being interrogated during the first few days of the trial. Several witnesses were summoned to tell about the fire which had happened at the factory. I didn't know about the fire myself, but I came to know of it during the trial. This is how it happened: Some time after my arrest there was a fire

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at my house, apparently as a result of incendiarism. The culprit was never discovered—there is little doubt that Veritchka's gang had their hand in that. The anti-semitic newspapers, however, began printing stories to the effect that it might have been my relatives who set the house afire, allegedly in order to obliterate the vestiges of my crime. The witnesses were therefore asked (they were mostly workers at the factory) when and where the fire had broken out. This was important, for the anti-semites were insisting that the furniture from my house had been first removed, and only thereupon had my house been set afire. The employees stated that the fire had broken out at midnight, and had they not been awakened betimes, all would have perished in flames. It was owing to a fortunate coincidence that they did awake at all. One of the workers happened to be drunk on that evening (it was Sunday). He was so drunk that about midnight he felt "sicker than a dog"—he commenced to scream and generally raise a racket. This awoke the others. All of a sudden they saw smoke and then fire. The smoke and fire were coming from my part of the house. My family was fast asleep, and (thus ran the statement of the workers) "had we not awakened the Beilises they would all have been burned to ashes".

Two young sisters by the name of Dyakonova were called up next. One of the girl's testimony proved to be highly interesting. She said, "I and my sister used frequently to spend nights in Tchebiriak's house because of her children with whom we used to play. One night she asked us to come and spend the night. She told us her husband was going to do orderly duty that night at the telegraph office, and that she felt very lonely at the prospect of remaining alone in the house. We came to

her, and about midnight when she had been asleep already, I noticed that on the floor there was something rather large wrapped up in a bag. I was curious and wanted to see what it was. When I uncovered the bag I saw a dead child lying there. I was frightened almost to death and ran to wake up Vera. 'Look here', said I, 'there is a dead child lying there—isn't it Zhenia (Tchebiriak's boy). Instead of giving me any answer, Vera Tchebiriak began to snore, and pretended that she didn't hear me. I was afraid to stay in the house—I woke up my sister and we ran home in the middle of the night'.

The P. A. and the lawyers for the prosecution, upon hearing the girl's testimony, were making wry faces and tried to confuse the testimony. The presiding judge put in another question: "Why didn't you tell all this before"?

The girls answered, "We were afraid. Vera is a dangerous person. She could easily have done away with us. We had to keep silent, but now we can tell the truth as it actually took place".

I could see that both the audience and the jury were deeply moved by the girls' story. The jury exchanged glances throughout the testimony.

A new witness, a barber, was called up who said he had been arrested one day and brought to the Outchastok (police station) where he found three other prisoners: Vera's chief gangsters, Rudzinsky, Singayeffsky and Latisheff, where they had been brought from Moscow. That night the barber overheard a conversation between the trio. He heard Rudzinsky telling Latisheff he was a stupid beast and without brains—"You have thrown him over to the factory yard—near the Jew's house". He did not hear anything else. This story he had told before to Fenenko. I must say here that the trial was rich in

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new revelations about things that I myself had no idea of whatsoever: I had been kept isolated for over two years. I, therefore, listened with the greatest curiosity to the testimony presented in court.

I was thus becoming informed of all that had taken place around me while I had been sitting behind the bars; then only did I realize what powerful evidence the authorities actually had against Tchebiriak. And yet they put me on the defendant bench while she was sitting in the court as a "witness".

Another witness was a Mrs. Malitskaya — she was in charge of a government dram shop (government liquor dispensary) with premises in the same house where the Tchebiriaks were living. The latter family lived on the upper story, the dram shop was on the ground floor. This Mrs. Malitskaya told the court that on the night of March 12th she heard something heavy being dragged on the Tchebiriak's floor. She listened attentively and could hear the screamings of a child — she did not know what was actually taking place, but that much she heard.



CHAPTER XXIII

AN HONEST PRIEST AND A DISGUSTING
RENEGADE

The presiding judge, was apparently becoming tired of listening all the time to evidence given in my favor; all that evidence clearly tended to show that the murder had been committed in Tchbiriak's house. Whether it was Vissimirsky, or th sisters Dyakonova or the ten year old boy or Mrs. Malitskaya, they all implicated Vera Tchebiriak. In order to change the impression the court began to summon the witnesses for the prosecution—to weaken the impression which my witnesses created at that time upon both the public and the jury. A deacon was called (something like an assistant priest) which was meant to have its effect upon the peasant jurymen. The witness began to speak quietly and at length. I felt that his words were making their impression upon the peasants. The presiding judge put the usual question to him, "Do you know anything about the murder"?

He began to answer, "I know a great deal".

"What precisely do you know"?

"I had known Andriusha Yustchinsky as a dear little boy. I could almost say a saintly boy. He wanted to become a priest when grown up. I was preparing him for the seminary. When I asked him once why he wished to become a priest he told me he liked the vestments very much. All of a sudden I heard one day that he had been

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murdered. It made a tremendous impression on me. Since I had known him, his mother asked me to assist at the funeral ceremonies. When the boy was about to be lowered into the grave, I saw pogromists' circulars spread among the public. As soon as I read these circulars in which it was being said that Andriusha had been murdered by Jews, I saw that Andriusha's death had nothing to do with saintliness. I understood that the whole thing had been done in order to arouse pogroms against the Jews".

In the Court Room there was considerable movement and whispering by that time. The Presiding Judge threatened to clear the hall if order was not maintained.

The next witness on the stand was a Monk. "What do you know about the murder"?

Here is what he said: "I am over sixty years old. I think more of the world to come than of this world. Therefore I must tell you the truth. My dear brethren, if only the earth was to give up its dead, and you could see how many Christian children had been murdered by the Jews".

It was obvious that the Monk was not out so much for giving testimony, as to make a Pogrom speech for the benefit of the Prosecution. A lively commotion started in the Court Room. The Presiding Judge interrupted the witness by a question.

"Have you seen it yourself, or have you just heard it told"?

Thus the witness, "No, I was just told so".

"Well, then, sit down", said the Presiding Judge.

The Monk sat down quite angrily. As I was later told, the Presiding Judge was severely reprimanded for this action of his by those higher up. He was given to

understand that he would lose his post if he kept up the same tactics at the trial.

The lawyers, however, were not through as yet with this individual and subjected him to cross-examination. The Priest also had to be cross-examined. He came to save Russia. At least, so he thought. He was out to save the honor of Russian justice, and then to receive such an insult from the Presiding Judge! The latter had actually had the cheek to ask the Monk whether he had seen any child murdered by a Jew. What if he had not seen, was it not the truth just the same?

It was Gruzenberg's turn to take this witness for cross-examination. Since, however, the witness was a Russian Priest, tact demanded that a Russian lawyer should take up the task. Gruzenberg therefore wrote a note to Karabchevsky and Karabchevsky proceeded with the work. The first question asked by Karabchevsky ran thus:

"Little Father, I ask forgiveness for this question, but I must ask it. Tell me, please, are you not yourself a Jew by origin? Is it not the truth?"

The Priest stood somewhat disconcerted. Apparently he had not expected, and he did not quite like the idea of revealing before the Russians his former Judaism. But he had to give an answer.

"Yes, I had been a Jew for fifteen years".

"Did you ever hear in your father's house that the Jews used Christian blood for Passover"?

"No", he said, "I never heard it in my father's house, but I came to know of it since I became a Christian".

Karabchevsky turned to the Jury.

"Look here, gentlemen", he said, "the Father says himself that he never heard of any such charges when

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he was a Jew. In the house of his Jewish father he never saw or heard of such a thing. He came to hear it for the first time only after he turned a Christian. What does it mean, if anything? Why, that there are such Christians who invent all sorts of wild stories and cruel calumnies, and you can readily understand that his new co-religionists told him this story for the simple reason to make him hate the Jews and never return unto his old fold”.

The cross-examination of the Priest was thus ended, and he was no more interrogated. The day's session was also at an end with this witness. It was quite late in the evening and all were very tired. The people went to their respective homes and I was sent back to jail.

The next morning at the beginning of the session the college student Golubov, one of the leaders of the Black Hundreds organization in Kief was called to the witness stand. He was dark complexioned and looked like a regular desperado. His appearance created somewhat of a sensation. For the prosecution rested largely on his testimony, and he was expected to show great prowess and wonders. The Assistant Prosecutor Vipper, the Presiding Judge, and the lawyers of the Prosecution, received him with great friendliness, and all manifestations of respect. He came up to the stand. We were looking at him. Apparently nervous, he was becoming paler and paler. The presiding judge inquired formally what did the witness know about the case and the murder? The witness was silent. This alone caused a disappointment. He was asked whether he did not feel well. He was told to cheer up and collect himself. To make it short, he was given a chair to sit down, and no sooner had he sat down than he fell into a swoon. The Black Hundred professors, the “experts” Kosortov and Sikorsy who were

also present turned to the famous professor Pavlov, the life physician at the Czar who was also there as a witness. They appealed to Professor Pavlov to help Golubov to regain consciousness.

Said Pavlov: "Well, why do you remain sitting? Is he not your witness? Why don't you do something for him"?

Finally Golubov was carried out by the attendants, half dead and unfit for testimony. He did not say a word on that day. Why he became so frightened nobody could tell. Was it pangs of conscience? Nobody knew. The best guess was that he was afraid of the galaxy of lawyers he was certain to face. He would have been cross-examined by the greatest legal talents in Russia, and he may not have remembered all he had told to the P.A. Of course, had he told the truth there was nothing to be afraid of. I must say right here that Golubov's father was a very fine and noble person. He was a Professor at the University of Kiev and had an honorable reputation. When the father Golubov had once been asked how it was he permitted his son to be implicated in such suspicious doings, he answered.

"What do you want of my son? For a while he was in the insane asylum at Vinnitza. Later, when he recovered somewhat and returned home, he became a member of the Black Hundred organization and of course they led him astray. He was made Secretary of the "Double-headed Eagle" and he is their leader. But he himself is misled, the poor boy, and is unbalanced. Let him alone, and do not mention his name to me".

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CHAPTER XXIV

LIES AND CALUMNIES

After Golubov was carried from the Court Room in a swoon, a new witness, a priest by the name of Schainevitch was called to the stand. His story ran thus:

"A lady had been living near my home who began to build a big house for herself. One day a Jewish broker came over to the lady and asked her whether she needed any money to complete the house; he was able to procure the sum if she needed it. He was told by the lady that no money was needed. The Jew, however, was not so easily put off. 'Impossible', said he, 'that you should not need any money. No matter how much one has, it always proves insufficient when building a house. I know it from experience'. The lady still refused him and he had to leave. About three days later he reappeared again and told the lady a story about her being presently summoned as a witness to Beilis' trial and again proposed to her that he would lend her any amount that she might want. This time the lady told him to come the next day. She would think the matter over and find out exactly whether or not she needed any money. She came to me as her priest and told me the whole story. She also asked me for advice: whether she should take any money or leave it alone. I told her: 'Don't take any money from the Jews. Chase him out the next time he comes. Have no business with him whatsoever'".

I saw that the priest's story was making no impression at all on the audience. That much one could see but too well; all of it was pure invention from beginning to end. He gave no names, nor any proofs whatever. A pure fabrication about a Christian lady who was building a house and about a Jew. The whole story was so clumsily concocted that it palpably did not fit. The audience smiled while the priest was talking. After that the Court Clerk began the reading of the testimony of a witness who was unable to appear in person in the court and whose deposition had been taken down in writing. His story was also as poorly fabricated as the previous one. That was the reason apparently why the witness did not appear at the Court.

This is how his story ran: He was in the same prison with me. I had already been there when he was put in jail. Why was he put in jail? Because of being a sort of solicitor and having had 'cases' before the Court. In connection with one of his cases there had disappeared from the Court some important protocols and documents. since he was conducting those cases the suspicion fell on him and the Court Clerk, and they had both been imprisoned. When he had been brought into the cell where I also was kept I embraced him and kissed him imploring his aid to save me. I was alleged to have been a good friend of his. I had had in the past several law suits and he, the witness, had helped me out of many a "tight place". I was said in this case as well to have asked him for his assistance in getting free. I was said to have told him that I had actually murdered Yustchinsky. The circumstances of the murder and the reason for it. I was said further to have implored him for advice in order to get out of the mess in which I found myself. Further-

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more, he declared that I confided in him all the "secrets" of the "Ritual". I gave him all the inside story, I told him that a ritual murder demanded among other things the participation of a physician who knows just what thirteen spots on the human body ought to be stabbed in order to draw most blood. I was alleged to have told him the name of the physician with whom he was to get in contact and from whom he was to receive a sum of several hundred rubles in order to "get through with the case". Who was that mysterious witness? It came out presently that he had been in jail for a certain crime. He had been in danger of being condemned to "military imprisonment" (Presupposing some offense and severe punishment for it). Being a desperate sort of a fellow he thought he hit the right expedient, and wrote a letter to the Minister of Justice himself, stating that he had important evidence to give against Beilis; if he were to be freed he would tell all and create a strong impression against Beilis. The Minister of Justice, the notorious Schtcheglovitoff, bit only too readily at the bait. He apparently believed he had hit upon a veritable find. The individual was promptly liberated. The Minister gave orders. The Court authorities had to carry them out. However, when he began to give his "testimony" the judicial authorities were not pleased a bit. Truly there was a chance that the peasant jurymen might be influenced with wild stories properly rehashed, but there was also every prospect that the lawyers would reduce the man's story to pulp and ashes at the cross-examination. Therefore he was kept away from appearance in person at Court.

Of course, Gruzenberg immediately inquired why such an important witness had not been brought to the Court. The presiding judge answered that the witness could not

be found by the authorities. They had lost his address. After this, the testimony of Kozachenko was also read in writing. Nor did he spare any wild stories which so palpably did not hold water that he himself had not dared to come to Court. His deposition was that he had spent several months in the same cell with me, and that during all that time we frequently conversed about Andriusha's murder. Since I knew that Kozachenko was to be released presently I asked him first to transmit a letter to my wife, and secondly to have a couple of witnesses poisoned. (Adverse witnesses, of course). As, for instance, the lamplighter and a certain shoemaker. I was alleged to have told him he would be given the strychnine by the doctor of Zaitzeff's hospital. I was further said to have promised him a handsome reward which he was to have obtained from "certain Jews". The story being read, Gruzenberg asked at once why so important a witness was not brought here. We would just like to hear all that from him in person, since the indictment was based in considerable part on this man's statement. The Presiding Judge gave the same answer: the police were unable to find the witness.



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CHAPTER XXV

THE TZADIKIM

Real gaiety broke out in the Court Room when the Sergeant-at-Arms brought to the witness stand the two Tzadikim, Ettinger and Landau, who were alleged to have been seen at my house dressed in the kaftans with the skull caps, wrapped in Talithim, etc. The real story about these two rabbis is as follows: The lamplighter, Shakhovsky testified to the effect that on the Sabbath morning before the murder, he had seen two Tzadikim in my house. The authorities therefore checked up the register of the factory and the office, and found on the books the names of two persons, Ettinger and Landau. Ettinger was a young man of about thirty years of age, clean shaven, completely "Europeanized" and hardly much of a Jew. He was very wealthy, and was Zaitzev's brother-in-law. Mrs. Zaitzev was his sister. Ettinger himself was Austrian. He had come once to Kiev to visit his sister's family. As a foreign Jew, he had no right to live in Russia outside "the pale". Even his millionaire brother-in-law Zaitzev could not help in this case. Zaitzev himself lived in the most aristocratic section of Kiev in the Lipki, and it was precisely in that locality that his dashing young relative had no right to reside. At least, legally, he could not have been shown on the house register. To surmount this obstacle a police captain of Zaitzev's district found the way out—as most Russian policemen knew how to

do when there was a prospect of remuneration. His idea was to have Ettinger register in the Plossky district where Jews had a right to reside. He was actually registered there, but spent his nights and generally lived in Zaitzev's house. Thus the law was obeyed in form which was perfectly *a la Russe*. He was duly registered at the factory, but as a matter of fact did not even know where it was located. He never put his foot inside of the factory. And furthermore, this dashing young man who came to Kiev to have a real time, what had he to do with the factory? Investigate the baking of the bricks?

The same was the case with Mr. Landau. He was a young man of twenty-five and was studying on the Continent. He was a grandson of the old Zaitzev, and was for similar cause also registered at the factory, as a resident. The Register showed that both these men had "checked out" about five months before the murder of Yustchinsky's boy. Nevertheless, the two young men were summoned as witnesses for the trial, since the experts had decided that the murder had been performed with the participation of Tzadikim in accordance with the "ritual", etc.

When the two neatly dressed young men were put on the stand, Mr. Gruzenberg, well-known for his wit, introduced the two to the Judges and to the public:

"These, gentlemen", he said, "are the two Tzadikim, who are said to have been praying wrapped in the Talith and dressed in the kaftans with their skull caps on".

The public, as most residents of the city of Kiev knew the Jewish customs only too well, were quick to catch the joke and a roaring peal of laughter rocked the Court Room. Ettinger could not speak Russian, and his testimony was given through an interpreter. He was asked questions of which he certainly had never dreamed before.

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He was asked whether he was a Tzadik. Whether he ate Matzoth Shmuro, whether he partakes of the Afikomon, and similar theological riddles.

He shrugged his shoulders perplexedly, but answered the questions patiently. The whole procedure apparently smacked to him somewhat of an insane asylum, but he was willing to go through with it. His statements were immediately translated into Russian. The Prosecutor, Viper, who had built up the whole indictment on the Tzadikim allegation became quite nervous when he heard the testimony. It did not fit to Mr. Viper's taste, and why should this young gentleman deny being both a Tzadik and eating Matzoth Shmuro?

Viper got up and turned upon the witness with asperity.

"Now, tell the truth; I also am German and understand everything".

He clearly wanted to create the impression with the jury that Ettinger was giving false testimony. Since the Prosecutor came out with an open accusation to that effect, the jury was likely to be impressed accordingly, and in fact, the peasants commenced to exchange glances between themselves. And how could those plain farmers realize that a dashing young man, spending his nights in chorus girls' parties could not at the same time be a Tzadik, wrapped up in a talis, and eating Matzoth Shmuro? I could hardly restrain my tears from anxiety and fear. When Viper saw that, he started to laugh, and the more he looked at me, the more pleased his laughter sounded. I had mentioned previously that Vera Tchebiriak had told the Prosecutor that she had been invited to come to the city of Kharkov to see a prominent person (whom she later insisted upon identifying as my lawyer, Margolin)

and that she was there offered forty thousand rubles to take upon herself the guilt of Yustchinsky's murder. She stated also that besides Margolin there were present at that Kharkov conference another gentleman and an associate editor of the "Kievskaya Mysil", Sergei Yablonovski. It was Mr. Yablonovski's turn presently to take the witness stand. He bluntly stated he had never been to Kharkov. Madame Vera Tchebiriak was called upon to confute his testimony. The Presiding Judge naturally asked her:

"Would you recognize the man who offered you that sum in Kharkov"?

"Yes, I could recognize him".

Yablonovski was brought up again on the stand. The Judge proceeded with his questions.

"Do you know this man"?

"Let him sit down upon a chair, and I'll recognize him", said Tchebiriak.

The Judge began questioning Yablonovski.

"Is what Vera Vladimirovna has told us true: that you and another man offered her money if she were to assume the guilt in this murder"?

Yablonovski smiled. "One of us is telling the untruth. It is for you of course to find out who of us is the liar".

"Well, Vera"? queried the Judge.

"You want me to sit down"? asked Yablonovski. He seated himself comfortably in the chair and folded his hands.

"Yes", said Vera, "that is he, that is the way he was sitting at the time — with his hands folded".

A roar of laughter broke out in the Court Room. The Presiding Judge inquired: "How is it you recognized him only by his manner of sitting and not by his face; one recognizes a man by his face, is that not true"? .

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She answered with an air of tranquility: "On that occasion, he was sitting just as he is now; that is why I recognized him". The public was quite merry at this testimony, and though I felt embittered enough I myself could not refrain from laughing this time.

The important witness, Shakhovsky, the lamplighter, was called again. The advocates and the public were ready for another sensation. This witness was one of the props of the prosecution, for the indictment rested on him in large part.

"What can you tell us about this case", inquired the Presiding Judge. To the astonishment of all Shakhovsky said:

"I know nothing".

Nothing! The records were brought up and the previous testimony of the witness was read aloud, wherein he had deposed that on that Saturday morning, 9 A. M., he had seen the Tzadikim, skul caps, talithim, prayers, and all in Beilis' house. How was it possible that he knew nothing this time? He gave a straightforward answer:

"I tell you the truth this time; that was my testimony at the time, but then I had been drunk. The detective Polischuck had plied me with vodka. I was angry at Beilis for he threatened to have me arrested for having stolen wood from the factory yard. Well, I did say all that stuff. I had not been under oath at that time. This time I have sworn, and must tell the truth. I am a Christian and fear God. Why should I ruin an innocent man who knows nothing about the charges brought against him"?

This plain statement was like a bomb thrown in the Court Room. All the Black Hundreds who were there

were completely dumbfounded. For the moment they lost their heads. The whole indictment was based practically on Shakhovsky's statement. So much had been expected of him, and all of a sudden such a shameful disappointment. Schmakov and Zamislovsky jumped to their feet and began to cross-examine the witness.

"How is it", almost implored Schmakov, "had you not told before about a woman Volkovna who had met your wife and mocked all of you, because you who lived so near the scene of the murder, knew nothing about it while the whole world knew that it was Beilis who had murdered Andriusha"?

The witness kept on repeating:

"I know nothing. I was drunk".

Thereupon Shakhovsky's wife was brought upon the stand.

"What do you know"?

The same answer: "I know nothing".

"What had you talked about with Volkovna"?

Shakhovsky's wife answered sullenly: "It was Volkovna who did the talking. But what does it amount to? I myself do not know a thing. If you are not satisfied, ask Volkovna".

Madame Volkovna was brought in. She proved to be an old peasant woman, barefoot, clothed in rags, a type from the underworld.

"What do you know about this case"?

Volkovna seemed to be quite peeved, and not a bit abashed.

"Leave me alone, all of you. I don't know a thing".

"What is your profession"?

"Collecting alms when I get them".

"What do you do with the money"?

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"That has been my occupation for years and years. At times I buy some vodka to drown my sorrows".

The public naturally laughed.

"Shakhovsky told us that you had been boasting that you knew all about the case, while they themselves knew nothing".

"Will you leave me alone"? The old woman was becoming quite angry. "What do you want of an old woman like me. I was drunk on that day and slept that night in the market. Leave me alone, and don't annoy me".

Her testimony produced quite an hilarious effect on the courtroom audience, and even on the judge.



"TZADIK" SHNEYERSON



"TZADIK" LANDAU

CHAPTER XXVI

THE BUBBLE OF LIES IS BURSTING

The testimony hitherto presented in the Court was clearly indicating that truth was on its way to victory. Not only was I being proved innocent by the witnesses for the defense, but even by those called by the Prosecution. Especially Shakhovsky proved a terrible disappointment for the Prosecution. He changed the whole aspect of the case. Apparently all was going for the better with me. Nevertheless, every time I would look at the jury, at their plain, pleasant faces, a chill would run down my spine. I did not know what impression all the testimony created upon them. Perhaps they were not grasping at all the import of it, the meaning of the whole procedure. A short intermission and the witness Krassovsky was summoned upon the stand.

This Krassovsky had formerly belonged to the Secret Police force and had risen to the rank of a detective captain. He retained that position for twenty years and had really distinguished himself by his cleverness and efficiency. There was no capital crime, no murder but that he was capable of solving it. He had been out of the limelight for many years, however.

When Yustchinsky's murder had first come to light, public opinion demanded that Krassovsky be put in charge of the police investigation. Such was the confidence he enjoyed. But the authorities were averse to such a course.

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The Black Hundred actually feared that Krassovsky would find the real murderers, and this was the last thing the anti-Semites wished to see. Only half a year later, when my lawyers commenced to insist the investigation be undertaken by a reliable police official, that is — by Krassovsky, he was put in charge. Immediately he found the right scent, and was about to discover the entire band, when the Governor himself interfered, finding some pretext or other with which to trump up a charge of malfeasance. The detective was deprived of his captain's rank and was put in jail. There, Krassovsky had to go through all sorts of humiliations. A law suit was instigated against him. He was acquitted by the Court, but lost his post, and was never reinstated in the police service. His sin, of course, was to have discovered the truth.

Krassovsky's testimony was not long. But what he said was quite sufficient.

"I used to come to Tchebiriak's house quite often after the murder had been discovered. During the time she was in prison, her two children, Zhenia and the girl fell ill. They were removed to a hospital. Immediately upon her release from jail, she ran to the hospital to take the children home. She was told by the physicians not to take the children, for the boy was so weak, he might die on the way home. But she would listen to no reason. She insisted on taking him home, come what might. She did it because she feared he might reveal something. She feared the questions he might be asked. I used to go to see the boy at home and ask him questions. Once while I was sitting and talking with him he turned pale and stopped in the middle of a word. I turned quickly and saw his mother standing behind me, in the act of making a sign with her finger that he keep silence. Once

when I came in, Zhenia was in bed. He did not feel well. Tchebiriak said to the boy: 'Tell them to leave you alone. Tell them you know nothing'. Zhenia retorted: 'Mother, would you ever leave me alone with your fibs and instructions'? A short while later the boy was dead".

Krassovsky and the Journalist Brazul-Brushkovsky gave many new facts in the course of their testimony. Facts, indicating clearly that the murder had been committed by Tchebiriak and her associates Singayevsky, Rudzinsky and Blatichov. No less clear and convincing was the testimony against this quartet given by the advocate Margolin who appeared at the Court, not as my lawyer, but as a witness.

For the first time during the trial did I become aware of the remarkable work performed by Messrs. Brazul-Brashovsky and Krasovsky; of their efforts to uncover the highly-protected murderer. While in prison, I had not had the least idea of their energy and the results achieved by them in my behalf. I had already received some information about Mr. Margolin. I had never imagined however that real Russians, non-Jews such as Messrs. Yablonovsky, Brushovsky and Krassovsky would actually sacrifice their safety and positions, all in the interest of truth. Never will I, or my family, forget, to the last day of our lives, these wonderful and enlightened men.

The District Attorney Fenenko was also summoned, and he told the story of his investigations. He ended by saying that he had not seen any grounds on which to base an accusation of ritual murder, or any murder at all against me. He knew that Shakhovsky the lamplighter was talking "through his hat" but he was unable to do anything. Since there were witnesses to testify against me, he had to draw up an indictment.

Young Zaitzev was then called up. The Presiding

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Judge put a series of questions to Zaitzev: did he ever pay homage to the Tzadikim; had his father ever done so; and similar questions. The last question was: why had it occurred that Beilis was the one put in charge of baking those matzoth which Zaitzev himself had ordered for home use, when there were dozens of other Jews in Zaitzev's employ besides Beilis?

The story about the matzoth runs somewhat as follows: The elder Zaitzev (who had died some time before the trial) was one of the wealthiest Jews in Russia, owner of fifteen sugar factories. He had a large sugar factory, with a beet field, in Rigorovka, twenty-five miles from Kiev. On that field, there were set aside several acres to be sown with wheat, and from that wheat several hundred-weights were usually set aside for "matzoth shmuro". That grain was kept in a separate granary the key of which was kept by Zaitzev alone.

About a month before Passover, a rabbi would come and under his supervision, about five hundredweight would be milled for matzoth. The matzoth would then be baked, packed in cases, and one case sent to various members of the family or freinds. This was the old man's habit, which was known to the family for long years. I myself had already been engaged in supervising the work for about fifteen years. When I was arrested, the correspondence between Zaitzev and myself in which I was ordered to go to Rigorovka for the matzoth flour, was discovered in house. That is why the authorities started the whole story about the matzoth shmuro. When asked why the elder Zaitzev had always sent me for those matzoth, his son told the court the following:

"Beilis' father had been a very religious Jew and always ate matzoth shmuro. My father knew old Beilis

very well. We had some commercial dealing with the old man. I myself once asked my father why it was that he had selected Beilis particularly to handle those matzoth. My father told me that he had known old Beilis to be strictly religious and to have trained his son accordingly, and he therefore felt that no one was better fitted to do that sort of work”.

Vera Tchebiriak was the most important witness who followed. Throughout the trial, the witnesses had always pointed to her and insisted that she was the actual murderer of Yustchinsky. Naturally, the public was giving her a wide berth. Early in the trial, she had appealed to the Presiding Judge for protection, alleging threats against her safety. Every time she would go home, she asked for a policeman to escort her, for she feared to be assassinated.

It is interesting to observe here that whenever the witnesses who were supposed to testify for the prosecution were asked why they had changed their previous testimony, and were speaking in my favor, they invariably answered: “We are Christians, orthodox churchmen. We don’t know a thing about the Jewish religious customs, whether they use blood or not, maybe it is true, maybe it is a lie. What do we orthodox Christians know about such things? As soon as we began to investigate this case, we discovered that it was Vera Tchebiriak’s deed. Then why should we accuse an innocent man? We are under fearful oath to tell the truth, and we know that the murder has been committed in Tchebiriak’s house”.

A great deal was expected from Tchebiriak’s testimony. She was relied upon to supply the best material thus far for the prosecution. As a matter of fact, she did not go beyond telling a couple of old stories, and when asked

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whether she had seen any of the things she spoke of, she replied that it was her children who had reported them. Since the children had been transported (apparently not without their mother's help) to the better world, by this time, it was impossible to verify the truth of her statement.

Yustchinsky's mother was then summoned, and even she gave an altogether different version from the one expected of her. Asked whether she knew Beilis, she said "No". Schmakov interposed the question: "Had you seen any Jews around the cave where your child's body was found"? She said "No".

Gruzenberg asked her the next question: whether she recognized the shirt shown her by the District Attorney, and which was considered an important exhibit by the indictment. Her answer was "No, the shirt is not Andriusha's". This produced quite an impression. I noticed that some of the jurymen exchanged glances and shrugged their shoulders. The Presiding Judge was next with a question: "Had your boy gone to visit the Jew's during the month of March? Once more she answered: "NO".

Testimony was taken for a period which seemed interminable. The long list of witnesses was finally exhausted, however, and the Court decided to go in a body to the factory where the murder was said to have taken place, and also to see my own house and that of Vera Tchebiriak's.



CHAPTER XXVII

THE RE-ENACTMENT OF THE CRIME AND
A BOMB THROWER

I began to feel somewhat more cheerful. For one thing, the witnesses were now finished testifying. Of course, there were still many difficult things to be endured. But I felt as though the greater part of the load were removed from my shoulders. And I welcomed the chance to see my house after two and a half years of imprisonment.

It was about three in the afternoon. Despite a heavy rain and a quite slippery ground, the streets were packed with people. The jurymen were surrounded by cavalry and police, lest they come in contact with outsiders. In order to avoid any demonstration, I was driven to the factory through unfrequented side streets.

At last we arrived at the factory yard and approached the house which had been my Kiev home for so many years. I remained in the coach. Some of the neighbors came out to see me. Through the little windows of the prison coach I could see them pointing their fingers at me and shouting "Beilis! Beilis!". Some wrang their hands and wept with excitement.

The presiding judge permitted me to go with my escort into the house and take a look at my old residence. My wife and children were not there—they had been warned to leave the house. I saw there only a new clerk—a Christian.

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Outside again, the mud was so deep we could hardly walk. Nevertheless, all of us—the judges, the jury, the experts, the pressmen, and the student Goluboff—made a complete survey of the factory. Everything was examined: the place where the children were wont to play; the spot where “the Jew with the black whiskers” had been reported to have been seen; the cave where the body had been found (here it was so dark that lanterns were needed); and the entire factory.

Standing near the kiln, Schmakov, the lawyer for the prosecution, turned to the jury. “Look”, said he, “there is from here a straight road to the cave where Andriusha’s body was found”. Mr. Karabchevsky immediately retorted: “But permit me to draw your attention to the fact that the road from Tchebiriak’s house to the cave is shorter and straighter”.

We now went to Tchebiriak’s house. The police had brought along a little Christian boy to re-enact the murder scene. They took him to Tchebiriak’s rooms on the top floor, held him fast, and told him to scream. The lawyers Zamislofsky and Grigorovitch-Barsky remained downstairs and listened—and they found that the boy’s screaming could be heard quite distinctly.

The staging of this scene had taken about two hours, Then I was sent back to the jail—and the others went home.

Ever since the beginning of the trial the prison officials had been treating me with unwonted consideration, respect, and friendliness. My every request, instead of being insolently unheeded, was granted with celerity. This time again, when I came back from the trial, the officials tried to outdo each other in courtesy to me. Whether my jailers were thus metamorphized into real gentlemen because of

orders from their superiors, or because of the impression created on them by the numerous witnesses, I can't tell.

The next morning in the prison coach, on the way to the trial, I was alarmed by the explosion of a bomb. There was great confusion for some minutes, and I feared the attack might have been directed against me. The coach stopped, but the officers ordered the driver to proceed. The reason for this assault was never discovered by the authorities. I learned later that one of the soldiers of the cavalry escort had been so badly wounded by the explosion that his leg had to be amputated.

This was the day put aside for the testimony of the experts and the scientists. The previous witnesses had been summoned only to tell of what had actually happened—to make clear who had committed the murder. The task of the experts was to throw light on the question of ritual blood murder. It was for them to prove either that the Jews were accustomed to use Christian blood in the making of the Passover matzoths, or that all these stories were infamous lies. Which, of course, they were.

The star expert for the prosecution was the Catholic priest Proneitis. He was not a Russian Orthodox priest—indeed, there was not to be found a single Russian Orthodox priest to do the “dirty work” for the authorities. So that Proneitis was a veritable find. He was presumably well learned in the Talmud as well as in the Kabbalah. In short, he had been announced as a great Hebraist. But when this “expert” began to talk it became obvious to all that the man was an amazing ignoramus, a fakir with a glib tongue,—what one might call a “broken vessel” of man. However, since the authorities stood in need of this creature, they had to pretend respect for him. For

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it was only this adventurer with his foxy Jesuitic expression who was willing to help out the anti-semites.

He began his story saying that the Jews offered human sacrifices and that the Jewish religion commanded its followers to murder gentiles. He quoted from the Talmud, "Murder the best of the gentiles". Then he swung off from the Talmud to the Kabbalah. In spite of all that, however, when the procurator asked him the direct question — if he knew that the Jews used Christian blood — he said they did not. His expert opinion was making no impression on anybody. In fact, the public laughed more than once when he clearly became confused at some of the questions asked by the lawyer. A sensation was produced by an incident connected with the number thirteen, the number supposed to have great meaning in the Jewish ritual. The prosecution insisted that the thirteen wounds which Professor Sikorsky discovered on Andriusha's body had been obviously inflicted in accordance with "ritual". It was afterwards discovered that there were actually fourteen wounds. Hence there was nothing left of the ritual story. All the vagaries and prevarications brought forth by Proneitis were completely refuted by Rabbi Maze, the well known and universally respected Rabbi of Moscow. He delivered a long speech quoting passages from the Torah, the Talmud and other books in order to reveal the depths of ignorance of that "scientist" and to show that the priest had no knowledge whatsoever of the Talmud and could hardly read a passage in Hebrew.

The jury listened with attention to all these explanations which they undoubtedly were unable to understand in all their meaning. Such things as Gemorah, Kabbalah, Rabbi Zalman, what had all that to do with these plain peasants? I was watching the jurymen with the greatest attention.

It was they who were to be my judges. They were to give their verdict upon the basis of the testimony and all these explanations and arguments. How was I to know if they themselves did not believe in the story of the Jews using Christian blood? And if it were true that there were such secret books, why shouldn't there have been secret things written in them? It was then that I saw in all its clarity the depth of the misfortune which had befallen the Jewish people, the horror of the calumnies heaped upon our nation by the villains of the Proneitis kind.



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CHAPTER XXVIII

THE VERBAL BATTLE

At last the day came when the final fight for my liberation began, for my very life as well as for and against the terrible accusation levelled against the Jewish nation; it was the battle between the prosecution lawyers on one side, and my attorneys on the other. The P. A. addressed the jury in approximately the following manner:

"I have spent about thirty years in the Czar's service. It is my task now to prove on the basis of facts that this man, Mendel Beilis, who is now sitting on the defendant's bench, murdered the boy Yustchinsky, and I shall demonstrate it so clearly that there will be no doubt left whatever. The world must know the truth. The world is awaiting the truth and to my lot it fell to demonstrate that very truth. And you gentlemen of the jury, you also are facing a great task. It is your duty to consider and to weigh all these truths and testimonies. You must decide what shall be the punishment for a man who has committed so horrible a crime. I am not telling you that all the Jews are guilty and that pogroms should be instituted against them, but it is true that there is a religious sect among the Jews, the so-called Chassidim-Tzadikim, who commit their crimes in secret so that the non-Jewish world never becomes aware of them. It is they who are murdering Christian children, and Mendel Beilis belongs to that criminal sect. The whole world has been deeply moved

by this crime, the world is in an uproar. Why is it so? Because Mendel Beilis", here he pointed his finger at me, "is sitting on the defendant's bench. You just catch one Jew and all the Jews will be set in motion and will exercise all their influence and their untold millions to get him out. Do you remember the Dreyfus case in France? The whole world was set agog, and why? Because he was a Jew. Let us then take up the other aspect of the question. Two and a half years have passed. Andriusha is lying in his grave, he has been forgotten by all. Who is playing the leading part? It is Mendel Beilis". (Again he pointed his finger at me.) "Had such a case happened with us Christians would anybody have said a word, would the world have displayed any interest? Do not forget gentlemen, that Andriusha is one of our own. We must not forget him. We cannot forget him! We orthodox Christians who are wearing the Cross, we must carry out the most terrifying verdict to avenge the Christian blood shed by this man".

Here the P.A. made a fine semblance of weeping and afterwards continued his speech with new asperity. "Just imagine the scandal of the thing. In broad daylight, in this holy city, where there are so many cathedrals and monasteries with all the holy shrines of Russia, here of all places the murderers get hold of a young child, a saintly child, a boy who has been preparing for the priesthood; and it is a Jew actuated by his religious fanaticism who seized that child, gagged his mouth, tied him hand and foot and inflicted forty-nine wounds upon one part of its body, and thirteen wounds upon another part in order to draw five pints of human blood. I am asking you how can we remain so unfeelingly charitable, so soft and unmanly as not to avenge ourselves on this man? Do you remember

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how our presiding judge asked Beilis at the beginning of the trial to what religion the defendant claimed allegiance? Beilis answered with a defiant shout, 'I am a Jew'. You understand what it meant. It meant I am a Jew and I laugh at you Christians. We Jews can do to you* what we well please".

Throughout this speech the P. A. kept on drinking water. At this point he seemed to have become exhausted and asked for intermission. I was completely distressed by the P. A.'s speech and felt as if the knife were at my throat. I thought that a speech of this kind was sure to produce the most pernicious effect upon the jury. Mr. Maklakov, the famous lawyer, came over to me and cheerfully slapped me upon the shoulder.

"Mr. Beilis", he said, "keep your heart up. It isn't as terrible as it looks. He speaks well, but we shall speak much better".

In a few minutes the P. A. was again continuing his harangue. It seemed to me there was no end to his speech. He was making desperate efforts to prove that it was I who had murdered the boy, only I and no one else. How could Vera Tchebiriak have had anything to do with it? Who could be low enough to invent such falsehood about her? Among other things he shouted, "There are good minutes even with the worst of men". On this very table there had been lying the bloody corpse of the murdered boy. Once when Beilis was brought in here he looked at it and began to weep. Why did he weep? Surely because he became remorseful for murdering an innocent child. At that moment Beilis was rueing his crime".

It was with the speech of the P. A. that the court session of that day came to a close. I and apparently all the audience left the Court room with a heavy heart and full of apprehensions.

Next day saw the beginning of a series of statements and speeches delivered by the experts and the lawyers. The following lawyers made their speeches: Messrs. Gruzenberg, Karabchefsky, Maklakov, Grigorovitch-Barsky, Zarudny; also the experts Rabbi Maza, the professor Troyitzky, Kokovtzeff and others. Each of them made splendid retorts to the arguments of the P.A. and the whole indictment. Mr. Maklakov, a famous lawyer and a Christian himself paid the following respects to the P.A.'s "proofs" and especially to the latter's anger at the Jews setting all the world agog.

"I listened with special attention to that part of the procurator's speech where that gentleman was telling us with a smile that the Jews always created a stir whenever one of their number was caught in anything. Will you tell me, gentlemen, how would we behave if, for instance, we orthodox Christians were to find ourselves amongst the Chinese, and the Chinese were to accuse one of us of a crime similar to that ascribed to Beilis? Wouldn't we try to "set the world agog"? Why should the procurator be so surprised at that? How could it be otherwise? How else can they protect themselves? By sitting quiet and keeping silence? Nor must you forget that we Christians have no fear of pogroms. The Jews, however, are in constant fear of pogroms and pogromists, and should they do nothing in order to prove their innocence?

"Another thing: we heard the procurator reproaching Beilis for having wept. We know why he wept. He was weeping because there had been a time when he was a man like all of us, free and unconcerned, and today he is facing so overwhelming a disaster. And are you surprised to see him weeping? Why did not the prosecutor mention the fact when Golubov had been brought here with so much respect and honor the man fell in a swoon

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and did not say a word? Was it because he knew he would have to tell a lie”?

It is difficult, of course, to give here the contents of all the speeches. I shall mention, however, some of Gruzenbergs’s words which made a particularly moving impression at the trial both upon the jury and the public. Among other things he said:

“Not long ago I studied together with Christians. I lived together with them, ate together, enjoyed and suffered together with my Christian friends. And now, all of a sudden I and my co-religionists are faced with this shameful, disgraceful accusation. We are charged with such an abominable crime, I am telling you now, and once and for all, and you know my words will be heard by all my co-religionists, if I knew for a moment that our Torah or other religious literature teaches us or allows us to use Christian blood, I should not remain a Jew for one hour. I am certain that Mendel Beilis will not be convicted, and must not be convicted. But should he be convicted, then let it be so. Why should he be more fortunate than ever so many of our brethren who have in the past lost their lives as a consequence of these indescribable calumnies and falsehoods? Beilis, if ever you are convicted, proclaim, ‘Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, and He is one God.’ Be of stout heart and good cheer”.

The audience was sitting as if petrified. There could be no doubt of the strong impression made by this speech upon the jury. They were listening to it with closest attention; for that matter, the speeches of all my lawyers made a most favorable impression. It seemed as if all the efforts of the Procurator, of Zamislovsky and Schmakov of all the Black Hundreds, were doomed to disgraceful defeat. But who could be certain of the thoughts and decision of the jury?

CHAPTER XXIX

I BARELY ESCAPE BEING SHOT

The great day came at last. It was the thirty-fourth day of the trial, the 28th of October, 1913. It was the day for the jury to give their decision, and as it happened an incident occurred that day which might have cost me my life, and would have dispensed with all the formalities of a verdict. At eight in the morning I was called as usual to the prison office to proceed to the Court House. Each time my escorts would search me and start on the drive to the Court immediately. Once the prisoner was in the hands of the escort, no one else had any authority over him. Since the escort signed a receipt for having taken over the prisoner, the escort alone was responsible for him, and no one else could touch him.

On this particular morning, after I was already in the custody of the escort, the Deputy Warden sent word to bring me back. He wanted to search me once more. The searches were a veritable inquisition. The moral and physical humiliation are hardly to be described. In accordance with the law, my escort refused to comply with the Deputy's order. The latter insisted however, that a special telegram had come from the Imperial Court, from the Czar himself, ordering that I be searched very strictly. My convoy was naturally impressed.

Though the Deputy could easily have availed himself of my escort for the purposes of the search, he called his

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own men, prison guards to do the work. I was told to undress, and complied with the order. I never removed the undershirt during these searches. This time the official ordered me to remove the undershirt as well. I became irritated, and in my excitement I tore the undershirt from my body, tore it into pieces and threw it into his face. He snatched his pistol and aimed at me. He was so inflamed with anger that he looked more like a wild man than a human being. It was unfortunate for me that the convoy, attracted by the noise, came on the run. Had not the convoy been responsible for my safety at the moment they would not have dared to protect me. But since they had already signed for me, they felt responsible. One of the escorts grabbed the revolver from the Deputy Warden's hand, and the alarm was sounded. The officials and guards came on the run. The Warden came in very excited, and turned to me.

"What are you doing? Is it not the last day of your trial, and you are starting new trouble"?

I exclaimed, "What do you want of me? Why does this man subject me to new insults? Was I not once searched? Why does he search me again in that most insulting manner"?

The Deputy Warden left. A few minutes later he returned and put down my escorts as witnesses of the incident. He intended, apparently, to press charge against me.

"Don't you imagine, Beilis, you are free. I will square my account with you yet. You will not escape from our hands and we shall see you with chains on your hands".

I replied, "You will never live to see it".

He consoled me: "Never fear, even if you are acquitted, you will be given a month of arrest".

That was, so to speak, my breakfast. A breakfast after which I might not have survived for another meal. The Deputy Warden would have been entirely within the law had he shot me. My action constituted an "assault" and he had full right to shoot. However, as it happened, I got off with a scare, and nothing more.



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CHAPTER XXX

F R E E D

The Court Room presented a holiday appearance. It was all over; nothing remained but the formulation of the end, the final touch. The Presiding Judge asked me with solemnity:

"Beilis, what have you to say in your defence"?

I rose weakly to my feet.

"Gentlemen, I can but repeat that I am innocent. I am too weary for anything else. The prison and the trial have made me tired of words. I can only request that you scrutinize all the evidence to which you have been listening the thirty-four days of this trial. Examine it carefully, and deliver your verdict, so that I may return to my wife and children who have been waiting for me these two and a half years".

The Presiding Judge began to sum up the case.

"Gentlemen, it is my duty to say nothing good or bad. I must be impartial. But this trial has been an exceptional one. It has touched upon a matter which concerns the existence of the whole Russian people. There are people who drink our blood. You must not take into consideration any of the things that have happened here: Neither the witnesses who wanted to whitewash Beilis, nor the experts who stated that the Jews do not use Christian blood; nor the stories of Vera Tchebiriak's guilt. You must disregard all this testimony. You must think of one thing alone:

a child; a Christian child has been murdered. Suspicion and the accusation have fallen upon Beilis. He is now before you on the defendant's bench. It is him you must try"!

This, and much more, was said by the Judge in what he called an impartial tone. His summing up amazed not only me, but a great many in the court room. Everyone was astounded to hear the Presiding Judge speak as though he were the Prosecuting Attorney. But he continued his summary until sunset.

It was about five in the afternoon when the questions to be put before the jury were decided upon. First, "At what place had the child been murdered"? And second, "Who murdered the child"? At last the moment had come. The peasants who composed the jury, in whose hands my fate rested, rose from their box and retired to deliberate upon the questions. I was led to my room.

The last moments of terrible anxiety! I had been waiting for them for years, and now they were on hand. My fate was to be decided in a few moments. Was I doomed to eternal darkness; were my wife and children to die from shame and grief, or would I come out a new man, free, and with all of life before me?

I was again brought into the court room. The jury was to give its decision, signed and sealed. It was to be read aloud. A deadly silence fell over the room. People almost stopped breathing.

The prosecuting Attorney, the lawyers for the prosecution, and all the Black Gang looked about them triumphantly. They seemed assured of victory. Only two of my lawyers, Zarudny and Gregorowitch-Barsky, remained in the court room. Gruzenberg, Maklakov and Karabchevsky had left. They were afraid of an adverse verdict and they

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did not feel strong enough to withstand the shock. After the exertions of the trial, they felt unable to endure it.

The jury had not yet entered the court room. All eyes were directed toward the door, toward the door through which the Great Secret was to come. At last the door swung open and the jurymen slowly filed in. During the 34 days of the trial, whose outcome concerned not only me, but the fate of all the Russian Jewish people, I had never removed my eyes from the jurymen. I had wanted to gaze into their very souls. What were they thinking about, these plain Russian peasants? They had been listening for more than a month to various stories: About the murder itself, about Jewish life, about our religious customs and laws. Had they believed all they were told? Did they realize that all the calumnies brought against me and the Jews were lies and falsehoods? Only a minute ago, and they had decided the fate of me and to a certain extent of millions of Jews. My life depended upon a single word of theirs. And at times, their decision is based on the persistence of one or two jurymen! God, could I stand it to the end?

Why was it dragging so long? Why not read the verdict? I looked into the eyes of the jurymen to read their decision. I had seen them so often during the trial, but I had never seen them like this. In the past they always had a smile on their faces, looked friendly. But now their faces were sombre and downcast. They must be inhuman. Suddenly the conviction rushed in on me that they had given a verdict of guilty. I tried to pull myself together and pray to God to help me sustain that horrible verdict. Let them shoot me, let them hang me, let them do as they please with me. I tried to find consolation in the thought that the whole world, the world of

honest men, would say that I had been a victim of flagrant injustice. All the world would know that the verdict was a colossal blunder. This gave me courage to hold out to the end.

By this time, the silence in the court room had become funereal. I cannot describe the rigidity with which the audience held itself, afraid to stir that it might not lose a word. The air became so intense that one felt it would suddenly break and tear us apart.

The foreman of the jury rose to his feet and began reading the decision. "Where had the crime been committed?" The jury decided upon Zaitzev's brick kiln. It was in the factory of which I was superintendent that the boy had been murdered.

Certainly then they had decided that I had committed the murder. I held myself rigid, and clenched my teeth. If the boy had been done to death in my factory, and I was the only Jew in the neighborhood, the jury would surely decide upon me.

The foreman continued reading

"If it has been proved that the murder was actually committed at Zaitzev's factory, who committed it? Was it the defendant, Mendel Beilis? Did Beilis take the boy Yustchinsky and inflict 49 wounds upon the boy's body, draw the blood out of the child's veins, and use it according to the Jewish religious laws? In short, is Mendel Beilis guilty or not?"

The jury had unanimously decided:

"No, Mendel Beilis is not guilty".

I cannot describe the noise and shouting in the Court Room that followed immediately upon the announcement of the jury's decision. First of all, there was a gasp of relief, and then many began to weep. I myself, with great

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joy, wept like a child. The Advocate Zarudny came to me on the run, shouting; "Beilis my dear man, you are free". The Colonel in charge of the escort who was standing near me, poured out a glass of water, and wanted to give it to me. Zarudny snatched the water from his hand, and did not let me drink it. The Colonel was deeply offended. "Why don't you let me give him a drink", said he, "is he not under my protection"?

"No", shouted Zarudny; and I had never seen him so excited. "He is not in your hands any more. At last you have no authority over him". He kissed me. Gregorovitch-Barsky came over later. "Well, let us all go", said Zarudny", let us tell this wonderful news to our friends and congratulate them".

At this moment the presiding Judge rose again and read the formula, to the effect that by the order of His Imperial Majesty I was freed and could take my place among the people in the Court Room. As a rule this was sufficient, and after the announcement of the verdict in this manner, the convoy soldiers ordinarily sheathed their swords and the defendant left the dock. I, however, remained seated. I did not know what I was to do, and the soldiers who surrounded me were still standing with their naked swords and made no move to put them into their scabbards. I glanced at Schmakov. He stood as if dumbfounded, and was muttering to himself. When one of his friends approached him, I heard Schmakov say: "It cannot be helped; all is lost; a terrible blow for Russia".

There could be no doubt that the public was rejoicing over the verdict. People were shaking hands, kissing each other, shouting their congratulations to me, wiping their eyes — and all these were people, most of them influential Russians, whom I had never known before the trial. I saw

that many of them wanted to come over to me to extend their congratulations in person, but the gendarmes and police did not permit them. So the public greeted me from a distance, women waving their handkerchiefs. The Presiding Judge finally ordered the room to be cleared.

The Russian gendarmes were experts at that sort of thing, and the Room was cleared in a few minutes. In the meantime, I who was liberated was finally recognized by all as the innocent Mendel Beilis. I was still sitting on the defendant's bench, with the soldiers, swords in hand, guarding me. While the people were leaving the hall, a very distinguished and gigantic looking Russian came over to me and spoke: "I am a merchant from Moscow. I left three large factories, left them almost without supervision and have spent more than a month's time here. I have been awaiting the moment of your liberation. I could not leave before. I knew I could not rest at home. And now, the Lord be blessed, I can go home rejoicing. I am very happy to be able to shake hands with you. I wish you all the happiness in the world, Beilis".

This Russian giant was weeping like a child, and was energetically wiping his eyes and blowing his nose. "God bless you, Beilis", were his last words while being propelled to the door.



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Beilis After His Acquittal

CHAPTER XXXI

THE PRISON BECOMES MY CASTLE

I remained sitting on the bench. My faithful guards, the soldiers, were still there. I was becoming impatient. Why was I not being told to go home? Two and a half years of prison seemed to be about enough. Apparently they did not feel like parting with me. The mercy that the Almighty who saved us from such a disaster has vouchsafed to me and to the people of Israel simply overwhelmed me. I thought of the joy which must prevail at my house at the time. An official came over and told me that the Presiding Judge wished to see me in his chambers. I felt certain that I was to be told at last to go home.

In the Presiding Judge's chambers I found the jury, the peasants who had tried me. When I came in, one of the jurymen tugged at my coat. As I discovered later, he was one of those who had stood up for me. And by this quiet tugging he wanted me to understand that he was my friend, and had done what he could for me. Apparently he was afraid to say it aloud, but he wished to say: "Well, we pulled you out, didn't we".

The Presiding Judge asked the jurymen to leave his rooms, and we remained alone.

"Mr. Beilis", he said, "you are a free man. I have no right to hold you even for a moment. You can go home".

I was about to bid him good-night when he raised his finger as if to detain me and began speaking slowly: "Wait

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one minute. I have something to tell you. I think that after all it would be better for you to spend this night in prison."

I could hardly believe my ears. Had they become insane, all these fellows? Had I gone through endless sufferings and humiliation and finally reached the great day of freedom—merely to go back to prison? And for what earthly reason? Why should they begrudge me the joy of my final reunion with my family?

Of course, I could expect no good from this judge, especially after hearing his summing-up speech which had been really inflammatory. He at once noticed my anxiety. He understood the apprehension which I felt and tried to reassure me.

"Calm yourself, Mr. Beilis. I assure you that I mean it all for your own good. Our verdict was one that the people did not expect. Mob feeling has been aroused, and you know how difficult it is to be responsible for eventualities in such a situation. You must also remember that it was in this city of Kiev that Prime Minister Stolipin was assassinated in His Majesty's presence. You know what that means. It did not occur so long ago. No one can be responsible when the people are aroused. Besides, since you have been so miraculously aided, and have withstood the tribulations of two and one half years, surely you will be able to endure it for an additional night. Do spend this night in prison. Meanwhile the people will cool down, somewhat. In the morning you will be able to go home."

I felt that he was not telling me all this out of sheer sympathy for me. But what else could I do? I feared that in case of my refusal to comply with his request, he was very capable of playing some trick upon me. At least I had no guarantee against it. I was indeed quite afraid of the

prison officials with whom I had clashed in the morning and who had threatened me with death if I came back to the jail. Nevertheless I agreed to spend that night in prison.

"In that case," said he, "we must write a formal application. The question is: what motive shall we put forward?"

He thought for a minute and said: "Good, we shall write it in your own name, that you request permission to spend this night in prison in order to return the government's clothes and to square up your accounts with the administration." He wrote the application and I signed it.

Meanwhile the Chief of Police came into the chamber.

"Well, Mr. Beilis, do you wish to go home? I congratulate you upon your acquittal."

The Judge made a sour face. Apparently he did not like the friendly tone of the Chief of Police, and said to the latter: "Beilis will spend this night in prison. Please see to it that he gets an escort."

I left the courthouse and was driven back to the prison by an escorting policeman, but this time not as a prisoner, but as a free man. I was in the same black coach, but things were quite different. Usually it was dark inside. This time there was a lamp burning in one corner. Ordinarily I had always been alone. Now the Chief of Police was in the coach with me, and he was most friendly and polite. He honored me with a cigarette and we chatted while on the way to prison. He piled me with questions all the time. He wanted to know how I felt during the trial and wanted to know the whole history of my stay in prison. "Well, the Lord be thanked," he said. "The whole business is over. I myself have almost become ill with anxiety. I was responsible for you and for the order in the city during the last two months. I had to be on guard lest any harm befall

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you. It was no trifle, I assure you, to control the excitement of the mob. I feel real joy in knowing that you have been released."

Once more we were nearing the dark and forbidding prison building, but I felt light at heart. I was free. On one of the streets the coach suddenly stopped. Upon inquiring the cause, the Chief of Police was informed by the escort that it was due to the military patrols which had been posted along the road in order to clear the streets of the people.



MENDEL BEILIS



Beilis and His Family After the Trial

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CHAPTER XXXII

HOME AT LAST

The coach stopped at the prison gate. A door opened and a squad of prison officials and guards came out. In the past every time I would return from the courthouse they used to be surly and savage. They would jeer at me and treat me in a rough manner. Everyone felt it his duty to say something. "Move on," "Don't crawl," "Walk like a man, you blood-drinker." This time there was a change of front. The villain of yesterday became a respectable personage. Not only did the officials refrain from pushing me, but they behaved with extreme gentleness, and even used a title unheard of by a prisoner: "Mr. Beilis, Sir." The politeness increased in proportion as I advanced into the prison.

A guard rushed for a chair for "Mr. Beilis to sit down." For "Mr. Beilis must feel tired." The warden then came to me. This man was really a heartless individual; and he never used to call me anything but "bloodsucker" and "murderer". He had often offered me "consolation", telling me the gallows awaited me.

This time I could hardly recognize him. He was human! He said: "Mr. Beilis, I congratulate you most cordially and extend you my best wishes. Do allow my wife and children to shake hands with you some time." He shook hands with me, and thereupon his wife and son came in and greeted me with true cordiality. The whole office

staff gathered around and vied with each other in heaping congratulations upon me. All seemed to be pleased. The prison official who had threatened me in the morning with instant death if I ever again fell into his hands stood there but seemed to be more frightened than anything else. He had no authority over me and knew it.

The Warden exclaimed: "By the way, do you know Beilis that we have some of your money, about nine rubles and fifty kopeks. You will get it at once. Some of your personal belongings, however, are in the storehouse, and you will get them later."

I was given the money and a few personal effects. When the Warden read my application signed at the court, asking for permission to spend the night in prison, he protested: "No, no, that won't do. Take the man home. He spent enough time in prison. Let him go home and see his family." Upon hearing this I forgot all the alarms with which the Presiding Judge had tried to impress me — about the danger threatening me, because the people were excited against me.

"I want to go home, I said. Apparently there was no order from "above" that I spend the night in prison. The application stated that "I myself" was asking for it. The Warden therefore had the full right to refuse my application. He gave orders for a cab, and a policeman was summoned to act as my escort on the road.

It was the rule in Kiev that any Jew released from prison and not possessing the right to live in Kiev had to go to the police station to be sent subsequently to his home under police supervision. I enjoyed the great privilege of "the right to reside," because of my boy who was a student in a Kiev Gymnasium. This was a special regulation which applied to Kiev alone, of all the cities of Russia. In other

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cities "outside the pale," the children acquired "the right of residence" because of their parents. In Kiev, however, it was the parents who acquired the sacred right because of their children who attended the schools: the children were not supposed to be left without parental care.

Since Zaitzeff's factory was situated in two police districts, I had to go through two police stations, via Plossky and Lukianovsky. I was driven along with great pomp; a squad of cavalry rode ahead of the cab, and two gendarmes sat on the driver's seat. Finally we reached the Lukianovsky police station. The captain of the station was a notorious Black Hundred anti-Semite. He could not endure the sight of a Jew. It was he who was one of the first to have entered my house on that unforgettable night of my arrest. But all this had been. Apparently, the hearts of all the authorities had changed. They all became different men with different manners. No sooner had I entered the police station than the captain came out with arms outstretched. "I am very happy to see you." He shook hands with me very cordially. "I want to ask a favor of you, Beilis, and I hope you won't refuse me."

"What can I do for you?"

"My daughter wishes to see you. She wishes to congratulate you upon your liberation. Will you permit her that pleasure? She is a Gymnasium student, who was terribly excited during the whole period of your trial. Everytime she read the papers and saw that something had gone wrong with your affairs, she wept like a child. She neglected her studies because of you. She used to go around moaning: "Oh, my God, how the poor man must be suffering. Now you must permit her to come and greet you."

During the course of this speech, the policemen at

the station looked at their captain as though he were a madman. It was an unusual picture for them to see their savage captain imploring a Jew for a favor; it was usually the reverse. And the official apparently considered it an honor for his daughter to talk to me.

Of course, I was only too glad to grant him his request, and said that I myself would be pleased to meet his daughter. The captain rushed to the phone. "Is that you, Marcia", he called, in a moment. "Your friend has come, the man Beilis. Come over to see him and be quick about it." While waiting for his daughter, he wanted to entertain me. "Would you like to drink something—tea or beer? I shall prepare the necessary papers in the meantime." Tea was brought in; the policeman who offered me the cup gave me the military salute.

The captain's daughter entered a few minutes later accompanied by a girl friend. The two seemed quite bashful and hesitated to come over.

"Well", encouraged the captain, "Don't be shy. Greet your friend Beilis". The girl finally came over and asked very timidly: "Are you Mr. Beilis? You must forgive me for being so bold. Here is a friend of mine; we both used to pray for you and weep for your liberation".

The two girls seemed to have been sincerely overjoyed upon hearing of my freedom. I could see how genuine and honest was their sympathy.

"We suffered so much because of you", said the girl. "We did not sleep whole nights; and always talked of your sufferings, but of course it was nothing compared to what you have gone through. But now, justice and truth have won out. I wish you peace and happiness together with your family".

I refer to all this because, as it happened, it was the

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first greeting, that I received, upon liberation, from pure, innocent children who had really suffered because of the falsehoods and calumnies that had oppressed me and the Jewish people. There came to my mind at the moment the words of my Gentile friend, Zakhartchenko who had said: "The stones of the bridges will burst, but the truth must prevail and shall prevail".

When all the formalities were over, the Captain accompanied me to the street and saw me seated in the cab. We now had to go to the Plossky police station. A large crowd had assembled there, composed of thousands of Jews who had learned that I was to be there. The streets were packed, and the police had a difficult task keeping order. No sooner had we reached the station than a Police lieutenant ran out and embraced me. He took me by the hand and lead me inside. The papers had apparently been prepared in advance, for the whole proceeding did not take more than three minutes. The lieutenant smiled at me, and offered to take me home. "I must have the signal honor of bringing you safe to your wife and children and to see to it that your house is properly guarded. Let us go".

I did not recognize my house. The old one had burned down during my imprisonment, but I recognized the neighborhood which I had known for so many years. It seemed as if it were only yesterday that I had been taken away from it, and my heart pulsed with joy and impatience.

In the house itself the children fell over me, shouting "Father, father", and they clung to me as if afraid that I might once more be taken away from them. They and my wife cried and danced wildly at the same time. Not

all of my family was present, however, three of my children were away.

On the day on which the verdict was to be given, the excitement in Kiev and especially in my district was really fierce. There was the fear of pogroms. The Jews were naturally apprehensive in case of my being convicted, for a terrible massacre would undoubtedly have broken out in Kiev. The Black Hundreds were all set for it. They expected to see me convicted; and had the jury come out with a decision that I was guilty and that the Jews use Christian blood, there is no doubt that the pogromists would have avenged themselves on the Jews. At our factory, this fear was at its height, for this was naturally the first place for the Black Hundreds to begin their activity. That is why my wife had sent the three children away to another part of the city.

Some of the neighbors began to gather. The lieutenant who remained in the house would not admit anyone, except upon my request. There were few people around, except for the usual residents of the factory, but there were many soldiers in evidence. An army of them was posted on the adjoining streets. Guards were thrown around the house and at the gate, and no one was admitted without my permission. The lieutenant sat in one of the rooms with two policemen, and every half hour or so the telephone would ring from the governor's palace, inquiring as to my well-being.

After a while telegrams commenced to reach me from all parts of Russia, greetings from a group of intelligentsia from Tzarskoye Selo, from the Jewish deputies of the Duma, from the famous Russian writer Korolenko, from the student bodies of the Universities of Moscow and St. Petersburg, from various private persons, Jew and Gentile

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alike. I tried to go to bed about two that morning. I was completely exhausted by the events of the day, by the anxiety and tension of waiting for the verdict, by the speech of the Presiding Judge. I gave the lieutenant three rubles as a tip for the police messengers who were bringing the telegrams. I lay down, but could not sleep. The excitement was apparently too strong for me, and then—who could sleep on such a night, the first night of freedom? Who could spend the most precious moments of a life in sleeping? I arose; tea was made and we recommenced our conversation.

No sooner did the dawn of the next day break than virtually thousands of people swarmed around and into the house. The street car on our street ordinarily stopped two blocks from our house. This time, however, somebody had a signboard rigged up in front of my house, reading: "Beilis Station", and the street car brought guests by the thousands.



CHAPTER XXXIII

A REJOICING WORLD

I believed that once freed, I would enjoy my former quiet life in the house. It was not meant to be so, however. My house was daily besieged by people coming to greet me and to express their joy at my liberation. Not only individuals, but groups of fifty and sixty people would come to the house at one time. The cabmen at the railroad stations, seeing groups of Jews descending from the trains would straightway ask: "Are you going to Beilis?", and they would drive them straight to me.

Dozens of automobiles always stood in front of my house. One party would leave and another would come. People brought flowers, chocolates; everyone wished to bring me something. The house was turned into a flower garden and a candy shop.

The whole procedure gave me great moral satisfaction. I saw the world taking an immense interest in my tribulations, and coming to me in order to express their joy at my liberation. I was very thankful, of course, though I must admit that the continuous handshaking was anything but pleasant for my hands, which became swollen after a time.

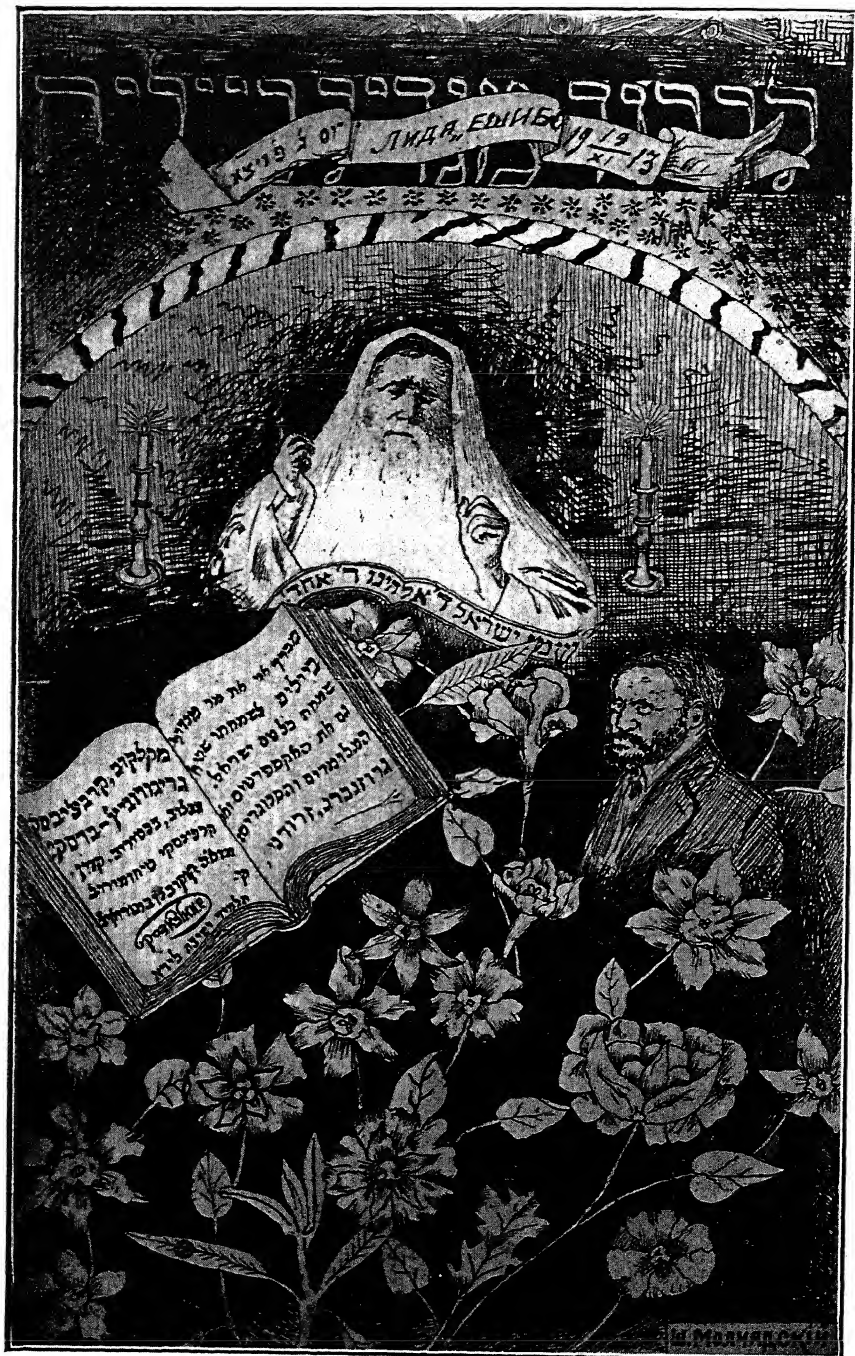
One day, two gentlemen came to visit me, one from St. Petersburg, the other a doctor from Lodz. Neither of them spoke at first, and finally one began to sob. The doctor spoke up: "Don't cry, it affects Mr. Beilis. He is

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still very nervous". In a few minutes, the doctor himself was in the same condition, and he went to the window, turned his back to us and was very busy with his handkerchief.

In a short while, I actually became ill, witnessing similar scenes, all of which affected my nerves. I was finally sent to Zaitzev's hospital. Many of the visitors who came to my house and did not find me became hysterical with disappointment, and anxiety for me. Some insisted that they must see me, or they would commit suicide. "Why, we have suffered so much with him and through him, and now we don't want to go away without seeing him. He ought to be taken out of the hospital". I therefore had to go back home. The numerous visitors again began their daily pilgrimages. The police captain who was in charge of the guard around my house used to jest, saying that in another month of such duty, he would be able to retire; he received so much money in the form of small gifts from my visitors.

One day a Russian priest came to see me. He entered the house, and without saying a word, fell on his knees, made the sign of the cross and wept like a small child. "Mr. Beilis", he said after a while, "you know that my action puts me in some danger. I should not have come to greet you at all. I could have sent my greeting by letter, but I decided to come. My conscience would not let me do otherwise. I came to ask forgiveness in the name of my people". He kissed my hand before I had time to withdraw it, and immediately left the house. This incident created a profound effect on me. I felt it to be a unique occurrence that a high Russian clergyman had come to a Jew to kiss his hand, and to bend his knees before him. What strange creatures the Russian people



The Testimonial Presented to Beilis on the Occasion of His Acquittal
by the Lydda Yeshibo

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are! On the one hand, there are the Zamislovskies, the Schmakovs, and the whole nefarious band of Black Hundreds; and on the other hand, one finds Russian clergymen coming to beg forgiveness of Jews for the persecution extended them.

On another occasion, a military Colonel, accompanied by a college student, came to my house. The Colonel was a giant, fierce and of forbidding military appearance. He greeted me and introduced his student son. He began pacing the room in silence. His spurs clicked, and the house shook with every step he took. I was overawed. At last he stopped, and turned to me. "Permit me to congratulate you most sincerely upon your liberation. I myself am posted in the Far East with my regiment. My family is also there. But I took special leave for a month in order to come here. I had to see you, and to greet you in person". Again I was shown how difficult it is to read into the soul of a Russian. Here was a giant, military Colonel, with the air of an executioner, and yet so gentle and humane.

We talked for a while, but he was silent for the most part. I noticed that he was oppressed by something. He arose in a while and bade me farewell, and left with his son. A moment later the bell rang; the Colonel was there once more. "Do forgive me, Mr. Beilis", he said "I must be annoying you, but you must allow me to spend another five minutes in your house. I am leaving for distant lands; we shall probably never see each other again". Before he left he asked for one of my cigarettes as a souvenir. I gave him some cigarettes and was rather sorry to part with him.

The famous Russian writer and friend of the Jews, Vladimir Korolenko, came to my home also. "Do you

know", he said, "I have been envious of you. I would have been happy to have worn your prisoner's uniform, to have sat in jail for you. You must have suffered very much, but you have suffered for the truth".

He spent considerable time with me, inquiring about everything with the curiosity of a child, and consoling me with the sincerity of a loving brother.

There were no less than seven or eight thousand visitors a day at my home. During the period immediately following the trial I received eleven thousand letters in all European languages, from all parts of the world, and seven thousand telegrams. Some of the telegrams were long messages; twenty-thousand visiting cards completed the collection.

I received the following letter from a lady in Petrograd:

"I am a Christian, from a well-known military family. But the militaristic spirit has not affected me. Jews have always been dear to me; it is an atrocious calumny to say that they want our blood. The truth is that we want their blood. It gives me great joy to know that you are free. My child shares my feelings. During your trial he used to look at your picture and say: 'The poor man. How much Beilis suffers and all unjustly. All on account of that murderess Vera Tchebiriak'".

It was during this time that the rumor began circulating that I was receiving money from many sources. The truth is that some people sent me a few rubles on a few occasions, why, I don't know. But the papers had it that I was becoming a millionaire. The result was that I was deluged by hundreds of letters asking for financial aid. Talmud Torahs, rabbis, hospitals, charity institutions, and innumerable committees asked for money! Students

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appealed for money to see them through college. One Jew had to marry off his daughter, and therefore he demanded a dowry. Some people had their notes protested, and I was summoned to come to their rescue. Nor were any of these requests for meager sums of hundreds of rubles. They went in for big money. No one asked for less than a few thousand. Meanwhile, the truth of the situation was that I needed help myself. I had not a cent left of my savings and did not know what the near future had in store for me. Among the numerous letters of sympathy that I received were also a number of messages from the Black Hundreds, threatening me with death. I could not, therefore, feel completely assured even of my safety.



CHAPTER XXXIV

PROVISION FOR THE FUTURE

The threats addressed to me by the Black Hundreds multiplied. Each day brought its quota of ominous notes. In addition, the Governor of Kiev insisted that I leave the city, for he could not be responsible for my safety. My situation was a difficult one. If I could not remain in Kiev and retain my former position, I was deprived of all sources of income, and would be unable to support my family. Financial worries began. Instead of renewing my quiet life, as I had expected, I had to begin thinking of moving somewhere else, and of starting life anew.

About this time a committee of three was formed, consisting of Dr. Bikhoffsky, of Zaitzev's Hospital, Rabbi Aaronson, and the well known financier, Joseph Marshak. This committee was to provide the ways and means of bettering my financial situation, and thus enable me to leave Kiev and earn a living elsewhere.

One day a representative of the New York American came to me, with an interpreter. This man made me a proposition to come to America for a tour of twenty weeks, for which I was to get \$40,000. I told the man from the very beginning that I did not want to go there, but he told me to take my time and to think the matter over. A few days later he appeared again. He told me he was leaving, but left his proposition open. "Of course, it is fortunate that you have been liberated, but

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you must not forget that you have to make a living. You cannot live long on hopes and sympathy. You won't be able to continue here. If you are going to America, you ought to accept my offer. I will attend to everything; whatever other proposition you may get, I am ready to double the amount offered. For the time being, give me a few autobiographical facts, and I shall pay you well", continued the newspaperman. I told him some of the incidents; the conversation lasted a few minutes, whereupon he produced \$1,000 and paid me.

"This", he said, "is for permission to print my conversation with you in our newspaper". Before leaving he gave me a personal souvenir, a golden watch. A few days later I received a telegram from H. Marcus of New York, proposing a contract for three years in his banking house, with a salary of \$10,000 a year.

I must admit that it was a great temptation listening to all these offers, especially in view of the difficult situation in which I found myself. I was losing my health, had lost my position, and could not remain any longer in Kiev. Nevertheless I turned away all offers.

The committee above referred to also rejected most of these propositions. A certain Jewish woman of Paris offered to present me with a house worth about three-quarter of a million francs, if I would come to Paris with my family. I thanked her very cordially, but refused. In addition to the difficulties of going to a country, the language of which I could not learn, I did not care to accept this munificent gift, somehow.

Among the many other generous offers given me was the one extended by a factory owner from Odessa, a Mr. Gershovitz, who told me that his son in New York, worth a million, had asked him to give me \$25,000 and send me

to America, where his son would take care of me. He also offered to establish a trust fund for me. I referred Mr. Gershovitz to Dr. Bikhoffsky, who was the chairman of my committee. The latter refused to listen to this offer, which made Mr. Gershovitz angry. "Will I gain anything from this? I want to do something for Mr. Beilis as one Jew for another; why then won't you listen to my proposition", said Mr. Gershovitz. "It matters not to me whether Beilis goes to America; the thing is, he ought to be provided for. If you want to send him to Palestine, very well; but he must also be able to live there in decent circumstances and suffer no privations. If you cannot send him to Palestine, let him go to America where he will be able to live in comfort. If as a result of your advice, Beilis should find himself in need, you will never forgive yourself. His fate is in the balance; what is your decision"?

But Dr. Bikhoffsky refused.

Similar propositions came from Berlin, Vienna and London. In London, a comfortable house was prepared for me at Mr. Rothschild's expense. The house was to become my property, fully furnished, immediately I arrived in London. A young Jewish student was specially sent from London to take me to England. I was told, however, that the climate in London being damp, would adversely affect my health, since I was already suffering from some of the effects of prison life. This last proposition was commented upon in the Kiev press, when the public learned that I had refused the London offer.

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CHAPTER XXXV

TO PALESTINE

During the deliberations as to where I should go, I missed the counsel of Mr. Gruzenberg, my former lawyer. I knew he would be the best man to give the proper advice. With his experience, he would know what I ought to do and what to avoid. I felt certain that the man who was ready to sacrifice everything to save me from prison, would also do a great deal to aid me for the future. However Gruzenberg was abroad at the time, taking a rest from the exertions of the trial, which had told heavily upon him. While he was abroad, I received a letter from him, in which he asked what I was doing, and expressed surprise that I was still in Kiev. ("I have suffered much less than you and yet feel completely exhausted and broken down. You, Mr. Beilis, have suffered much longer, and I am sure you feel the consequences. Why don't you go away somewhere for a rest. I understand your situation very well; the same occurred to Hilsner. After the thing is over, the people forget about you. I cannot think of your living insecurely in Kiev. How is it that no one seems to be doing anything for you"?)

I heard people talking about my future, but nothing practical seemed to result. I had nothing more tangible than words. Finally the committee got together to make a definite decision. The proposal was that I be sent to

Palestine. Mr. Marshak and Dr. Bikhoffsky were opposed to this plan; they wanted me to settle some place else. Rabbi Aaronson prevailed in the end, and it was decided to have me go to Palestine.

Then the committee wanted to know what occupation I would choose for myself. "We shall give you the means to take up whatever you like. Do not consider it as a gift. It is merely our duty to you".

I could hardly decide upon anything specific. It was all so definite and concrete. I had to say: "Gentlemen, I cannot decide upon anything just now. I believe that it would be best if you were to make up my mind for me. I would not be averse to having a little house which would bring sufficient income for a modest living, and a piece of land connected with it which I should be able to work. I like farming very much, and I always wanted to live on the land".

"In that case", said Mr. Marshak, "there is no better place than Palestine. We shall give you the necessary means".

The plan was to have me go to Trieste first and to get a month's rest there, and then embark for Palestine. I began preparing myself for a parting with Holy Russia. I must confess that it was not easy. There were many Black Hundreds in Russia who were eager to shed Jewish blood, but on the other hand there were so many wonderful Russians. How many Russian prisoners, supposedly depraved people, had wept with me in jail; how many Russian children had not slept nights and prayed to God for my release? And then the Russian intelligentsia, what an interest they had displayed in my case, how much energy they had spent for my sake, and how great was

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the joy of these people, when their efforts resulted in my liberation!

My impressions were obtained not only from the hundreds of Christians who had come to my house to greet me and to rejoice with me, but from the numerous letters I received and the indirect reports. In addition to harboring a fondness for these people, it was difficult to part with my native land, where I had been born, grown up, had suffered and enjoyed life.

It was planned that my departure was to be kept a secret. No one, not even my relatives, were to know. We had to take these various precautions because my life was in danger. One day I went to the Governor's palace, in order to get my passport. There was a line of about seventy people waiting for their passports. I was recognized immediately and one man, one of the first in line, let me have his place. In the Governor's office I was received with considerable pomp. A chair was brought in; and my passport was ready in a few moments. I was carefully escorted to the cab, and bade a hearty good-bye.

My departure occurred in December, 1913, and although we believed it had been kept a secret, events showed that it had not. In a few days after I had secured my passport, the newspapers had big headlines that I was to go abroad. We were not very anxious to have the anti-Semites know that I proposed leaving Russia. But since the day and hour of my departure was not known, I was safe. We selected a day when the crowd would be busy with their vodka.

CHAPTER XXXVI

FROM KIEV TO TRIESTE

Goodbye, Kiev, farewell my native land, farewell all my friends with whom I have spent my life! I am leaving for the land of our fathers, for the Holy Land, where once flowed milk and honey, and which has always been dear to my heart. I am going to rest body and soul in the Land Of Israel. These were the thoughts that passed through my mind.

On the evening of my departure from Kiev, I was supposed to be invited to a party given by a friend, to camouflage my leaving. Dr. Bikhoffsky went ahead to the station to buy the tickets, so that I could go into the train at once, and not be seen at the station, in case any of the Black Hundreds were prowling around.

I did not even bid farewell to my brother and sister; they had not even been told that I was leaving. A coach drove up to my house in the dark. I put spectacles and was dressed in a huge cloak, so that I would not be recognized. My wife and children had gone ahead on the train previous, and were to wait for me at Kazatin. There we took another train which was going direct to the Austrian border, and were accompanied by the manager of Zaitzev's factory, Mr. Dubovik.

The whole night we sat in the coupe as in a dungeon. We did not let anybody see us, for fear of being recognized. At break of day, I went into the passageway for a minute.

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I noticed two Russians, promenading. The moment they saw me they approached and asked: "Aren't you Mr. Beilis"? I became suspicious at once and looked for spies. It seemed to me that these two might belong to the Black Hundred gang, and had possibly been sent out to do away with me. Of course it might have been nothing but suspicion, but I had to be careful. Therefore I answered: "I should like to be Beilis, but he is already in America. Do you know him"?

"Yes", said one of the men, "I was in his house".

When some of the Jewish leaders in Berlin learned that I was going abroad they sent two men to the Austrian border to assist me in crossing the border. Upon their arrival at the border station, they told the officials whom they were expecting. We finally reached Podvolotchisk; there a couple of Austrian officials came into the train and asked for our passport. The moment they saw I was Beilis, they didn't even look at my baggage, and told us we were free to proceed.

On the other side of the border we had to wait a short while for the train to Lemberg. During that interval the people of the little town came to know that I was there. Jews came running from all directions, and as is the general custom at a Jewish celebration, a general weeping ensued.

Apparently the Jews of Lemberg had also been informed of my arrival. As our train came slowly into the station, and as I looked through the car windows, I could hardly believe my eyes. The whole platform, the station house, and the adjoining streets were lined with people. The shouting was deafening. Had the train left immediately, it would not have been so bad. The trouble was that we had to stay there for a time. The crowd

insisted that I come out and show myself. I was not inclined to do so, however. The station master thereupon came into my car and begged me to come out for a minute; he feared that the crowd might somehow damage the station. Besides a number of people had threatened to post themselves on the rails and not permit the train to go further. I had to go out, therefore. I bade farewell to the assembled multitude, and a few minutes later our train left for Vienna.

We reached Vienna in the early hours of the morning. There we were met by the representatives of the Jewish community, Adolph Stern, Kaminka and others. We had tea in the train and were driven to our hotel where we expected to have a little rest. We were hardly there a few minutes than we heard knocking at the door. It was Mr. Stern announcing that some of the foremost Jews of Vienna had come to pay their respects. Mr. Stern engaged an additional suite of rooms as a reception chamber to accommodate the many people who came to visit me during my stay in Vienna. That first day there was an aggregation of professional men, lawyers, professors and doctors. Some of the doctors declared that they would like to examine me to see if I was well. I gave them this permission and they declared that I was well, only very much run down and exhausted because of the many things I had been through. A special dinner was arranged for that day and about sixty persons were present. Some of the most eminent men in town attended the dinner, among whom was the editor of the Vienna paper, "Neue Freie Presse".

We were kept pretty busy by visits and official receptions. I was driven about the town in an automobile and shown the sights of the wonderful city of Vienna. We

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drove to the Jewish Musical School, where the choir enchanted The Blessings, and the cantor sang the appropriate chapters from Psalms. After two days we were ready to take our departure to the South—for Trieste. In the latter city we were met by Rabbi Chajes, who is now the chief rabbi of Vienna. My sojourn was to be kept a secret, too, and since all hotels required guests to show their passports, a special place was found by Dr. Chajes so that I would not have to show the identifying passport. We took our meals with a certain *shochet*, who did not know who I was. It was arranged between me and my family that my name should not be mentioned aloud. One Friday night when we came to the *shochet* for the meal, there were about thirty Jews around the table. At one time conversation shifted towards the Beilis case and one Jew said it was known that Beilis was in Trieste at the time, but unfortunately he had to travel incognito so that the Black Hundred would not persecute him.

At these words one of my children could not restrain herself from bursting into laughter. Some men looked at the child and one of them asked why she laughed. The Jews became suspicious for the moment; they began to exchange glances, whispered. At last they discovered that I was Beilis. And that was all that was needed to start things going.

A tumult arose in the streets; people ran to Professor Chajes' house, in order to reproach him for having kept secret my whereabouts. In the end a reception was tendered me in a big hotel and thousands of people came to see me. I was besieged with requests for autographs, and in the end I stayed in Trieste for a whole month.

CHAPTER XXXVII

IN THE LAND OF ISRAEL

Finally the day came for us to bid goodbye to Trieste and to Europe. We boarded the ship and started on our voyage to the land of Israel, the land in which I was expected to pass the remainder of my years. The moment the passengers on my ship became aware who I was, there was no lack of demonstration or sympathy from both Jews and non-Jews. The Captain and the ship's doctor asked for permission to come to my cabin for a visit and conversation. The doctor showed me my picture which he had clipped from a magazine. A group of Christian passengers presented me with a gift.

The nearer we got to Palestine the more cheerful I felt. We had to pass one port on our way to Palestine and that was Alexandria. Thousands were on the dock to see me. While the ship was entering the port a number of people came out in small boats in order to meet the ship and bid me welcome. I was met by a band and representatives of various Jewish societies. No sooner had we reached land, than I received an invitation to attend the circumcision celebration of one of the local Sephardic families. I felt very tired but excuses were of no avail. At the party I was honored with all sorts of testimonials.

We finally reached the port of Haifa on the 16th of February, 1914, in the land which was to be our new home. A delegation came aboard to greet me, including

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Rabbi Cook, Rabbi Ben Zion Azeil and Messrs. Levitan, Schenken, Mosseson, and Diezengoff. Rabbi Cook delivered a speech in which he stressed the fact that I had selected Palestine as the country of my residence in preference to the many lands from which I had received tempting offers. Afterwards, Rabbi Cook pronounced a formal blessing on me.

In addition to the deputation which came on board to meet me, a boat was sent out to carry us ashore. The Arabian boatmen came out full force, shouting "Long Live Beilis". On the shore I was awaited by the students of the Jewish gymnasiums, who bore flags and flowers. The children sang and a band played.

One of the Arabian chiefs, who owned the finest coach and pair of horses in the whole district, honored me by having me driven to Tel Aviv. This honor had been conferred in the past only upon the most exalted guests, for example, Rothschild when he had visited Palestine. But the Arabian chieftain went even further. Not satisfied with having left his coach at my disposal, he himself, accompanied by a retinue, rode in front of the coach, acting as my guard of honor. On the way to Tel Aviv the road was lined with Jews. A great number of them had come from the colonies especially for this occasion. In Tel Aviv I was put up at Herzl's Hotel, and there too I was greeted by representatives of various organizations and colonies, by the Poale Zion, the City Board of Aldermen, the Ica, the Shomrim, etc. Numerous speeches were delivered, naturally, at all times.

The Land of Israel had an invigorating effect upon me; it gave me new life and hope. Nature itself, the life of the people, inspired me with vigor and the desire to live. When we had left Kiev, it was cold, and the

fields were covered with snow. Here everything was green, and the sun was warm. It was the most beautiful season of the year in Palestine. Everything was blooming; the hills and the fields were covered with vegetation.

I could not get too much of the atmosphere. For quite some time I would wander around, inspecting every corner of the country, breathing the refreshing air, deep-lunged. At first I could not sleep at night; I felt as though I did not want to lose one moment of the fragrant, inspiring nights in Palestine. In the meantime, of course, I continued to be feted, received and greeted in various districts. The first Saturday in the land, Rabbi Cook invited me to attend his synagogue, where he held a two-hour discourse about me.

A week after my arrival in the country, a deputation of Jerusalem Jews came to me, inquiring where I planned to settle; in Tel Aviv or Jerusalem? It would be an humiliation of Jerusalem for me to settle anywhere else, they declared.

"But Jaffa and Tel Aviv belong to Palestine, too", I answered.

"Yes, but it was we who prayed for you at the Wailing Wall", they protested.

I began preparing to go there in a week or two. I would constantly receive messages from there, asking when I would come. They wanted to prepare a reception for me. I answered, however, that I preferred arriving secretly, that I was ill and weak, and the receptions tired me out. And moreover I was afraid that the reception would keep me from seeing Jerusalem as I wanted to.

As a matter of fact, the receptions the first two weeks tired me very much. They were as numerous almost as the ones following the Kiev trial. It was almost Passover,

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and innumerable tourists were arriving in Palestine for that holiday. Almost every ship brought seven or eight hundred people, all of whom wanted to meet and greet me, to shake my hand, and to express their sympathy. These, in addition to the native Palestineans.

Before I left for Jerusalem I inspected the colony of Petach Tikvah. I visited the place in company with Isaac L. Goldberg, Sholom Asch, Polakov and Mr. Bril and we spent some time there. My first contact with a Palestinean colony gave me the utmost satisfaction and joy. The next day we went to Achutt, where I spent three days. At the local celebration I was the guest of the pupils of the Jaffa Gymnasium.

At last I decided to visit Jerusalem. Some of my party wanted to go along with me. Upon our arrival, we put up at Amdursky's Hotel. My name was kept a secret, however. In a few hours, after our arrival, one man recognized me. The proprietor of the hotel was very much insulted. He could not understand why my name should have been kept a secret from him. Especially since he had prepared a special suite of rooms for me. Within no time, the news had spread throughout the town, and the endless receptions began. In the three days which I spent in Jerusalem, I had to visit all the synagogues, inspect all the hospitals and charity institutions, and inscribe my name in all the albums.

The greatest point of interest, for me, was the Wailing Wall and the site of the ancient Temple. Approaching the Wailing Wall, I was reminded of the words of the Jerusalem Jews: "We prayed for you at the Wailing Wall".

Jews throughout the world prayed for the happy outcome of my fate, during the whole time of my imprison-

ment until the day of my liberation. My misfortune was the misfortune of the whole Jewish people. But there was something closer to me in the fact that Jews had prayed at the Wailing Wall, there, where Jews have wept and prayed for almost two thousand years, bemoaning the great national loss, the supreme tragedy of the Jewish people, their bitter exile. My trial was but an episode in the history of our life in the Diaspora; it was but a part in the record of our national sorrows. Surely the praying for me at the Wailing Wall was most appropriate.

It was with mixed feelings that I came close to the old wall, to the silent witness of the ancient Jewish glory and the present inglorious. I relived the whole Jewish exile and also re-experienced my own sorrows. As I was standing at the wall, absorbed in thought, I heard a sudden cry. Turning, I saw H. Berlin, one of the members of my party, crying. It was surprising from a man who had no Jewish characteristics whatever; he had been supposed to be far-removed from Judaism altogether. His daughter, a doctor, who could not even speak any Yiddish, was crying hysterically.

Berlin later explained to me that he had cried both from sadness and joy. "I reminded myself of our exile, but I also thought of the new hope for a Jewish Homeland", he said.

On the site of the ancient Temple, as everyone knows, there now stands a Mahommedan mosque. Pious Jews go nowhere near it; and the Mahommedans permit no "unbelievers" to enter it. In my case, however, an exception was made.

"We will permit you to enter the mosque", I was told by one of the leading Arabs. "You belong to the three great Jewish heroes and martyrs". One of the others he

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mentioned was Dreyfus. I was given a guide to take me through the place, and was shown all the curiosities. I saw the place where Solomon was supposed to have kept his horses, and the rostrum from which he addressed the people.

From Jerusalem I returned to Tel Aviv, and began the process of becoming a resident gradually. For a month we lived in the hotel, then we took up residence with *Haham Bashi*. The fetes and celebrations continued until after Passover. In the first place, the stream of tourists who wanted to see me was uninterrupted, and secondly, the natives themselves let pass no opportunity at which they could hold some kind of celebration for me. At Purim time, for example, hundreds of Jews came to my house for the big repast, and danced there and made merry until the small hours of the night.

On the second day of Passover, which is already a half-holiday in Palestine, everyone goes to the public squares. I was present at one of these gatherings; at that time Nahum Sokolow was visiting the town. Mr. Eisenberg, the chairman of the affair, welcomed the two guests of honor, and Sokolow spoke in honor of the occasion.

As time went on I became more attached to Palestine. The climate was doing me good. It healed my physical and spiritual wounds. In a short time I felt as though I were a native of the country, as though I had been born there and had lived there all my life. I was pleased by the country and everything in it, from the people to the inanimate things. In Tel Aviv, for the first time, I began to appreciate what the true Jewish life is. I saw for the first time a race of proud, uncringing Jews, who lived life openly and unafraid.

When people would plead with me to go to America, I answered:

"Before, in Russia, when the word Palestine conjured up a waste and barren land, even then I had chosen to come here in preference to other countries. How much more, then, I would insist on staying here, after I have come to love the land"!

Even if it had been only for the fact that I could give my children a Jewish education, I would prefer to stay in Palestine. I came there with five children, three sons and two daughters. In Russia I had always lived among Christians, one Jew among four thousand non-Jews. It was extremely difficult to raise my children Jewishly. My children knew no Yiddish, and it was still more difficult to teach them Hebrew, not to speak of the impossibility of giving them a thorough Jewish education. In Palestine my children had the opportunity of living in an unadulterated Jewish environment, received the best type of Jewish education, and in three months were able to speak Hebrew. How glad and overjoyed I was at this last accomplishment.

In deciding the question of education for my children, there was the difficulty of choosing between the old and the new Palestine. Rabbi Cook advised me to choose a school of the former type; the instructors at the Jaffe Gymnasium came to me, however, and pleaded that if I would not send my children to the Gymnasium, it would be a blow to the school. I told them all that I was so happy that my children had the opportunities of receiving a Jewish education, that it mattered little where they got it.

I finally decided to send my oldest son to the Academy and the others to the Gymnasium. There were many who volunteered to coach my children after school hours.

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Among these was Mr. Engel, of the Academy, and Mr. Berlin, and his two daughters.

At last I thought I was comfortably settled, with the fates of my children adequately disposed of; and that now I could retire to a peaceful existence. But just at this time the War broke out and broke up all my well-laid plans and hopes.



CHAPTER XXXVIII

MY FORTUNE CHANGES

The War had broke out, and like a prairie fire had caught everything in its path. It swept from country to country, finally including Turkey, and of course Palestine. The Garden of Eden was turning into the Valley of Gehinom. Even just before the war, the poetry of my life had become diluted by quite a bit of prose, and the prose began gnawing at me.

The question of money came to the surface, the question of "How shall we eat", how shall I provide for my children. The committee which had been selected to take care of me in Kiev had decided that I should go to Palestine, and I had been satisfied. They had said: "Beilis, do not worry. We will do everything. We will provide for you adequately".

But these promises were not being fulfilled so quickly.

I had travelled from Kiev to Palestine at my own expense. As I forgot to mention before, the representative of the New York American had given me \$2,000 additional for other material I gave him. In all I had \$3,000 or six thousand rubles in Russian money. I deducted 500 rubles for my expenses and left the rest with Zaitzev. Even in Trieste I had begun to feel the lack of money. Now that I was in Palestine, day followed day and week followed week, and I was being feted, wined and dined, but the questions became more insistent:

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What will the future be? What will be the outcome? How will I provide for my family?

At that time, Baron Rothschild of Paris visited Palestine, and the plan was that I should meet him, but somehow or other this never came to pass.

At Passover time, Mr. Bikhoffsky of Kiev came to visit me. He told me that the 5,500 rubles had been deposited to my account in a Paris bank and that I would always be able to get the money at the Anglo-Palestine bank at Jaffa. He said: "Rest assured, you will get everything we promised you. You will get the house, and will have the means to live in peace. Don't worry about anything".

Before his departure, he selected three men who were to "look out" for me.

A few months passed and I saw that nothing was happening. I asked them to let me go to some place where I could make a living, but they answered my fears by advising me not to be concerned. Everything would be done in the proper manner.

I had been patient enough for two and a half years in prison, had been able to endure the taunts of my prisoners and the daily physical and spiritual suffering. I supposed that I could wait for a few months to see that these promises were kept, the promises that were made on all hands and with the greatest of heat.

It never rains but that it pours! A whole summer passed in waiting and hoping, and suddenly the War broke out. Instead of breathing freely, I again became a sort of prisoner.

As soon as Turkey entered the War, foreign subjects were the first to be aware of it. Everybody was told to leave the country. There was only one escape for me:

to become a Turkish subject. And thus in my old age, I became a Turk.

Because of the War, Levantine, the director of the Anglo-Palestine bank had to leave, and a German Jew was appointed in his place. When I came to the latter, asking for money, he refused, saying that he did not know me. I immediately went to the local committee of three, but they did not recognize me either. Nobody knew me, all of a sudden, had never seen me.

What was one to do, how provide for oneself?

The Turks decided to take my son for the army, the one who attended the Jaffa Gymnasium. I myself was driven to Petach Tikvah. While all those who were driven out had been provided for in the matter of housing, I was one of those, who, upon arriving, in Petach Tikvah had not been provided for. In order to pay for some sort of lodging, I had to sell some of my possessions.

My son went in company with a group of other students. When Jemal Pasha came to Jaffa, he decided that the students of the last three classes, sixth, seventh and eighth, should be sent to Constantinople to the officer's training camp, but would not be sent into battle. My son was in the fifth grade at that time, and was barely seventeen. He decided, however, to enter the Army. I opposed it, and pleaded with him against it.

"You are still young", I said. "You should not do it. I cannot permit it".

"I want to do something for the Jewish people", was his answer. "If we should serve Turkey faithfully, the government will treat us more leniently after the War. Our possibilities for acquiring Palestine will be much greater".

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"But my service suffices for both of us", I returned. "I have suffered enough for the both of us".

"I am a man already, and I must fulfill my own obligations. I can no longer be satisfied with your achievements. At my confirmation did you not say the sentence: 'Blessed art Thou who hast rid me of him'".

He needed only one more reason to strengthen his determination to fight: Turkey was fighting against Russia.

At last he won. He saw to it that he was counted among the students of the sixth class, and thus became a Turkish soldier. He was sent away with a hundred other Jewish lads to Constantinople. Jemal Pasha, however, did not keep his word. After a short time they were all sent into the field of battle. And while our children were fighting for Turkey, we were driven here and there. Jemal Pasha lost all his former humanity. He changed his entire demeanor. He declared that in view of the fact that England might be the victor, he would see to it that none of us at least would ever see an Englishman. Wherever he would go, he would take us with him.

The command to leave Jaffa staggered me. I became so nervous and hysterical that when I walked upon the porch of the house, on the morning when we were supposed to leave town, I fell down in a faint, and bruised myself. I am deaf on one ear to this day, on account of it.

The field of battle came nearer and nearer. When the battle of Gaza took place, we could hear the thunder of the cannons. I naturally thought of my son, who was in the battle, and was in danger of his life, who might be giving up his life for Turkey, while the leaders of the country were driving us mercilessly.

One day as I was walking in the street, a young man came up to me, and whispered in my ear:

"Your son is at my house".

In great anxiety for the safety of my son, I grasped the hand of the young man with such a grip that he began shouting. I had the strength finally to ask: "Dead or alive".

"Alive", was his answer.

Then I must see him at once. But the young man would not take me to him under any circumstances. He told me that my son had deserted the army in company with another Jewish officer, and that they were hiding at his house. They would undoubtedly be hunted. He was afraid to take me to my son in the daytime, in order not to lead the Turks to any traces of his whereabouts. But I could not wait, however, until night. I could not endure the agony of it. At last he gave in.

Thank God, my son was alive and well. But why had he deserted the army and how? How could he have dared to do such a thing? I was told the following story:

My son had heard about the indignities to which we were being subjected by the Turks, and he could not remain with them any longer. So one day he confided in another officer, older than he—the father of three children—that he had decided to desert and proposed that the other should do the same. The latter, however, attempted to dissuade him.

"It is impossible", he said. "It means sure death".

"Then I will do it myself, if you are afraid", said my son.

The other man finally gave in.

They decided upon this plan: that they would both

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go to a nearby village to buy food, and leave from there. After they had been travelling for some time, they were met by a squad of German intelligence officers, who offered to take the two Jewish-Turkish officers with them. That fitted in with their plan. But what happened, however, was that the Germans lost their way and instead of leading the two deserters away from the camp, they were carrying them back. As luck would have it, they discovered this in time to turn back.

At one point they went into the house of a Jew, where they took off their clothes and burned them, and put on other clothes. Afterwards, they were put into a wagon, covered with oranges and brought to Petach Tikvah.

On the one hand, I was happy, that I was to see my son. On the other hand, I recognized that he was in mortal danger. My troubles increased on all hands. My son became ill with typhus. Here I was, driven from Jaffa, wandering from pillar to post in Petach Tikvah, without any money, and here was my son, a deserter, down with typhus. At this time the order was given to go back, because the English were coming. The Turks disposed of things in heavy-handed fashion. Those who were rather slow were bound and led like sheep. To add to things, Turkish officers were going around inquiring where Beilis was.

My son finally recovered from the typhus, but he was still weak from its after effects. A certain Jewish officer, in order to save us, attached a certificate to our door, certifying that the house was quarantined — that there was a typhus patient within. As the Turks were very much afraid of infecting the army with typhus, they did not even approach my house. Of course they did not know that it was I who was within. Then the English entered

the town, and we were thus saved from death. I took advantage of the interval to walk to Jaffa in order to get some money for my starving family. Having gotten the money I turned back to Petach Tikvah. On the way back I encountered the stringencies of military law. There was a battle in the vicinity. After a great deal of difficulty I finally succeeded in getting into Petach Tikvah and rescuing my family from there, and bringing them in safety to Jaffa.

A miracle occurred for me at this time. A few hours after I left Petach Tikvah with my family, the Turks recaptured the town and razed my house to the ground. Whether by accident or providence, I do not know, but the fact is that had I remained there another hour there would have been nothing left of any of us. Not only were the Turks incensed against the Jews in general, because they were accused of too great intimacy with the English, but they were particularly angry with me.

With the arrival of the English, things became much easier. New hope was aroused for the establishment of a Jewish home-land in Palestine. My son, who had formerly been anxious to join the Turkish army, and then deserted it, became the first recruit in the Jewish legion, which aided the English in defeating the Turks. Rothschild embraced him as the first member of the Legion. Colonel Patterson, the commander of the Legion, was very much attached to him. He regarded the Legion as sacred. He felt that it had done more than its share. He himself never took leave of absence, nor did he permit others to do so. Furthermore, the parents of the legionnaires received a certain amount of aid. He saw to it that there was no difficulty in our getting the pension. My son was finally sent to Alexandria to train for officer.

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After the war he still maintained that the Legion should be kept up, in order to protect Jewish interests in the land. As for his leaving the Legion, there was no question about that. He did not leave the Legion until the last moment.

But I have gone past where I had intended, and I must turn back at this point. When the English became masters of the land, the situation was much easier, and after all the privations and hardships, I again began thinking of a future, and I hoped anew that at last the people who had promised me so many things would do something for me.



CHAPTER XXXIX

MANY PROMISES AND FEW FULFILLMENTS

In the meantime I learned that in the year 1914, two persons, one of them James Simon of Berlin, had made up a fund of 41,000 francs. The money had been set aside to buy me a house. Besides these two people, no one gave anything. At that time, one could have bought a nice house with the sum. But where the money disappeared I don't know to this day.

During the time of the War, my own money was reduced to almost nothing. It was paid out to me in small amounts, and because of the difference in the rates of exchange, I lost a great deal. In the end, there was still no house.

When the English entered Palestine, a certain Mr. J. G. advised me not to be concerned about the future, everything would end happily. He was going to Paris to see Baron Rothschild and everything would be settled. In the meantime, he gave me a loan of fifty pounds. When he returned, he told me that he had talked with the Baron and the latter had given orders that things be done for me. A representative of the Baron's was supposed to visit me in the near future, and then the whole matter would be settled.

We are now in the year 1920, that is, eight years have elapsed since I was freed from prison, since I was given my first promise in Kiev. Eight years have gone—

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and nothing has yet been accomplished. Eminent visitors have come to Palestine, in the meantime, including Chief Justice Brandeis. They all visited me and advised me to wait, urging me not to be concerned with the future, dissuading me from thinking of going anywhere else, telling me to remain in Palestine, where my future would be amply provided for.

Time did not remain stationary however. Month followed month, and I kept on waiting. In the meantime, there came to Palestine a certain Mr. Judkovski of Paris. He told me that going into a synagogue one time, he saw how money was being collected for Beilis.

"How can you people be gathering money for Beilis? Who gave you the authority? Where does the money disappear? What sort of a world is this? Everywhere money is being collected for Beilis and he, poor fellow, hasn't enough to keep body and soul together. You people ought not to gather money like this. It ought to be a systematic, authorized affair".

Later, Mr. Judkovski met a certain Mr. W. who assured the former that everything possible was being done for Beilis. Hearing this, Judkovski decided to refrain from exerting himself in my behalf.

When the representative of the Baron came to me, Mr. G. said: "Now, Beilis, tell them what you want and you will surely get it". I could only say that I wanted only that which had been promised me. It had been spoken of so long to me that I began thinking of it as my right. I told the representative of Rothschild that I would like very much to be given a small house with land attached.

A few days later I ran into Mr. G., and asked him how things were getting along, whether there was any

change in my status. He said that he was going to Paris to settle things, and if he could not arrange it with Rothschild it would be with somebody else.

I am sure that Mr. G. was thoroughly honest; there is no doubt that he tried to do a great deal for me. The question remains, however: why did he not see the thing to its logical end, why was I fed with stories for so long a period?

It was a short time before San Remo that Mr. G. went to Paris. I remained without any money. Nothing was left of the 41,000 francs. Some other money that I had gotten in the meanwhile disappeared too. And nobody was giving any more. The Ica kept at a distance too. My situation became desperate.

Summer — and G. returned from his trip. I wrote to him and asked him for a few pounds so that I could leave the country. I was deeply humiliated to ask for money in this fashion, but the endless promises had brought me to this pass. I had no alternative. He answered that I should not think of leaving Palestine, I must remain there, and he would see to it that I got money. In July, G. again left for Paris and I was left with the promised fortunes. He returned, but left again in December.

I began to realize that affairs must be straightened out. I began thinking seriously of leaving, but where was one to go? What was one to do? As matters became worse from day to day, I decided to go to New York; at least, to get some money there, the money that had been set aside for me by the American Jewish Committee some years ago. Also, I might find some means of making a living there.

It was certainly not easy to make up my mind to leave Palestine. I did not want to leave the country;

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I had come to love it; I had become so attached to the Jewish life of Tel Aviv. I had wanted to bind my future and that of my children to the future of Palestine. I liked work on the land, and wanted to devote myself to agriculture. I surely had no desire to remove my children from the land where they had grown to be such upright, stalwart Jews.

In addition to the fact that I had no desire to leave the country, my oldest son was strongly opposed to it. When I told him that I was thinking of going to America, he became deathly pale. It was only after I had convinced him of the exigency of the situation that he even partially consented to let me go, but begged that I should not stay in America for a longer period than three months.

I myself thought that I would not stay there but a short time. I did not even think of taking my wife and children. After getting some money there, I would return and live quietly with my family in Palestine.

Isaac L. Goldberg kept pleading with me: "Palestine is an out-of-the-way place; the world has forgotten you. Go to America and tour the country; the American Jews will remember you and do their utmost. I am sure that they will provide for you amply and send you back here where you can live comfortably".

It was decided that I leave. Where was I to get the money, however. I went to Jerusalem, where I met a young man by the name of Aaronson, who was kind enough to give me forty pounds, and letters of introduction to Baron James Rothschild and to Judge Mack in New York. I was given minor sums by other people, and began preparing for my journey. The American consul was very friendly to me, and when he heard that I was

Beilis, he was very quick in getting me a vise, and wished me a happy journey.

I arrived safely in London, where I was besieged by everybody. But instead of inquiring about what I was doing and what I intended doing, and about my future in general, they were interested in the past. They overwhelmed me with questions as to how the whole thing had happened, they rehashed all my old troubles and sufferings. What could one do in a case like that?

Do not imagine that the people in London did not flood me with promises. They all promised, and urged me to be assured about the future; everything would come out all right. But could I live on promises? I explained the circumstances to all of them. I told them that I required nothing of any of them. I told them how originally I had been advised to go to Palestine, where they were to buy me a house, from which I would be able to make a living. I had acquiesced and gone to Palestine. And now I had been there for nine years and none of the promises had been fulfilled yet.

I merely requested that I be not misled by further promises. The fact was that had I wanted to make money I could have made huge amounts, and all in an honest way. I could have provided myself for a lifetime. I did not do it, however. Furthermore, I was not allowed to do it, and that furnished the basis of my complaint. The Kiev committee took full responsibility upon themselves to provide for my future. And I wasn't going to suffer any hardships any longer.

My London friends admitted that my complaint was just, and nevertheless they did nothing for me. As I had a letter for James Rothschild, I expected to await his return from America. However, my ship left the same day his

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arrived, and I had to send him the letter by mail. Just before I left I ran across Mr. Marshak of Kiev. He was surprised that I was going to America. He tried to assure me that everything would be allright, and that he had not forgotten his promises to me. Whatever he had said in Kiev would be done. He declared that it was through him that Rothschild himself had promised 10,000 francs.

But we parted — he to Paris and I to New York.

What a remarkable meeting. Nine years ago this man had come to my house and assented to my going to Palestine, had finally even urged me. Nine years later, his promises not yet made good, we meet on the way — but I, returning from the land where he had persuaded me to go.





KRASSOVSKY
Witness for the Defense

GENTILE CHAMPIONS OF THE JEWISH CAUSE IN THE BEILIS TRIAL

By
ARNOLD MARGOLIN

"A friend in need is a friend indeed", the ancient saying goes. This has been demonstrated time and again by instances too numerous to count, on the thorny path of Eastern European Jewry, at times of particularly severe persecution, during periods of wholesale calumnation of Jewry, in the fires of pogroms.

Only too often it was found that the very Gentiles whom their Jewish neighbors had come to regard as friends, being neighbors of a lifetime, living side by side, next door, turned their backs upon the imperilled Jews denying them help and refuge at the darkest hour of danger and death. And, on the contrary, again, it happened not infrequently that Gentiles who were absolute strangers and had no Jewish associations whatever still did their utmost to save Jews from the pogrom mobs, giving them

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shelter in their own homes, risking even their lives in an endeavor to protect the Jews from the fury of the mob.

Especially large was the number of those Christians who took up the cudgels on behalf of Jewry in the famous Beilis trial, when Mendel Beilis was accused of the murder of a Christian boy, Andrey Yustchinski, for Jewish ritual purposes. We ought to say, however, that this was a case involving not alone the vital interests and honor of all Jewry, but also the honor and dignity of Russian justice and of the Russian State as a whole.

This explains the circumstance that in the ranks of those who protested most loudly and emphatically against the shameless, cynical behavior of Minister of Justice Shtcheglovitov, of the Prosecuting Attorney of the Kiev Provincial Supreme Court, Chaplinski, and of their obedient henchmen, we find even some well known anti-Semites and reactionaries, of whose part in the Beilis affair we shall have something to say further on.

The mere enumeration of all the people, who, in one way or another, gave expression to their attitude towards the Beilis case would require many a page. Suffice it to say that there was not a newspaper within the borders of the former Russian Empire that did not devote extraordinary attention to this affair throughout the two years from the day that Mendel Beilis was put in prison until he was acquitted. Such world-renowned Russian writers as Korolenko, Gorki and Andreiev; famous professors of theology; not to mention a host of other representatives of pulpit and platform, of the bar and other learned professions, of art and literature, and the citizens in general, — they all voiced their protests, through the press and in many other ways, against this infamous attempt to cast a slur, through the person of Mendel Beilis, upon his entire

race, charging it with the practice of ritual murder. Similar protests were published by the churchmen, scholars and writers of Western Europe and America.

In the present article we must confine ourselves to the names of those good Christians who took a direct and immediate part in the Beilis case, both in the official investigation and court proceedings, as well as in the private, voluntary efforts to find the actual assassins of Andrey Yustchinski.

The first and one of the worthiest places in the ranks of these friends of truth and justice belongs rightfully to VASILY IVANOVICH FENENKO, Investigation Magistrate for Cases of Extraordinary Importance, as his official title used to be.

Feneko had a solid reputation as a most able investigating magistrate, who had to his credit the solution of many a baffling and complicated crime. He consistently kept aloof from politics. Prosecutor Chaplinski evidently never expected to meet with any opposition from Magistrate Feneko when he contemplated turning the Yustchinski murder into a charge of ritual murder against the Jewish people. He entrusted this able and upright magistrate with the investigation of the case, assuming, however, the direct supervision of the investigation.

However, all these expectations of Minister Shtcheglovitov and Prosecutor Chaplinski, all their hopes that Feneko would be merely a blind instrument in their own scheming hands were frustrated. Feneko from the very first day went to work with no other object than to bring to light and to justice the actual assassins. In this work he was antagonized and hampered by the Black Hundreds of Kiev, who left no stone unturned to make this a ritual murder case and who stood under the

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protecting wings of His Excellency the Minister of Justice himself.

When Chaplinski proposed to Magistrate Fenenko, verbally at first to indict Beilis for the murder of the Yustchinski boy, Fenenko categorically refused to carry out the proposal. Chaplinski then sent the magistrate an official written order to charge Beilis with the crime. It was now up to Fenenko to either submit or resign from office. He was, however, sufficiently well situated not to be dependent upon his official position. But he understood at the same time that his resignation was likely to have a very detrimental effect upon the issue of the case. They would at once have filled the position with a magistrate more tractable and subservient to those higher up . . . Fenenko therefore decided to submit, and he complied with Chaplinski's direct order so as to gain time and see Justice done in the end.

He continued to do everything within his power to bring to justice the real assassins, giving appropriate instructions and useful hints to those courageous and honest men who were then carrying on, at their own risk and expense, a private investigation.

This private investigation, as is known, had some very important consequences. One result of it was that the fact was established that the Yustchinski boy had been put to death by professional criminals under the leadership of one Vera Tchebiriak. Even Minister Shtcheglovitov himself appeared much upset by the results of the private investigation, and an order was then issued to hold a so-called official "supplementary investigation", or, in other words, a brand-new investigation. By that time, however, Fenenko was already removed from this case, and the new investigation was put into the hands of that well known

time-server and Jew-baiter, Mashkevich. This person, who was capable of anything, handled the case in perfect accord with Chaplinski's instructions.

Counsel for the defense of Beilis brought Fenenko into court, to act as witness. No one who was present at the examination of Fenenko that day will ever forget the firmness and the dignity with which this gentleman informed the court of his absolute conviction that Mendel Beilis was innocent. And then, to the question of counsel for the defense, he made the emphatic reply that he felt certain that the murder had been committed by Vera Tchebiriak and her accomplices in the crime — Singavski, Rudzinski and Latisheff.

This view of Magistrate Fenenko was fully corroborated by the evidence brought to light thanks to the self-sacrificing work of the humble journalist, Brazul-Brushkovski (now daed), the former police captain Krassovski, and police lieutenant Kirichenko. The former chief of the secret service in Kiev, Mishchuk, likewise devoted a vast amount of labor and efforts in this case. For their pains in behalf of even-headed justice all these men were subsequently hounded and persecuted in many different ways by Prosecutor Chaplinski. All these good Christians had but one single motive animating them in their efforts; to see justice done. It was this, and this only, which induced their voluntary assistance to the case of Beilis and Jewry.

The part played by the influential but reactionary Kiev daily "Kievlianin" in the Beilis case was most important. Although an avowed anti-Semite, its editor, the late Professor Pikhno, who was unquestionably one of the most influential persons in Russia at that time, had come out openly already before the beginning of the trial with the

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demand that the prosecution of Beilis be stopped and that Vera Tcheiriak and her band should be indicted instead. And when Pikhno died, his step-son, the Duma Deputy Vasili Shulgin, came out in the columns of the "Kievlianin" in full support of the late editor's policy in the Beilis matter. True, the protests of Pikhno and Shulgin did not deter Shtcheglovitov and Chaplansky from their nefarious work, but the effect upon the general public, shaping their opinion, was incalculable.

It was due to the testimony of a number of *CHRISTIAN* witnesses that the part of Vera Tchebiriak and her accomplices in the killing of Andrew Yustchinski was established, revealing the motives of the crime and something of its actual circumstances. Among the large number of witnesses who were examined at the trial there were several honest and courageous Christians who happened to know Beilis as well as the Tchebiriak woman, being neighbors. And these humble, obscure citizens thought it their duty to come and tell the court what they knew of Beilis, praising him as a most honorable, stainless neighbor, and also to tell what they knew of Vera Tchebiriak, denouncing her as a professional thief.

Acting as experts for the defense, to testify regarding the nature of the wounds on the body of the murdered child, we had Russia's most celebrated surgeon, the late Professor Pavlov, and the well known surgeon Kadian. To give expert testimony on the question of whether the Jewish religion demanded human sacrifice, we had at the trial the Russian professors of theology, Troyitzki, Kokovtzev, Tikhomirov and Glagolev. There were also the two great Russian psychiatrists, Professors Bekhterev and Karpinski.

Among counsel for the defense we had four Christians:

Russian's most famous lawyers, Karabchevski, Maklakov, Zarudny and Grigorovicch-Barski. Every one of these men brought to the Beilis trial not only the finest professional talent, but a sincere, genuine feeling of outrage and indignation at this wholesale indictment of the Jewish people. They fought at that historic trial for justice, shoulder to shoulder with the Jewish defenders. But the Jews merely did their duty to their own people. The Christians, however, who came to our assistance betrayed in this case as much love for an alien race as for their own. And this is why Jewry the world over shall forever pay reverence to the names of all these good Christians who joined the battle for the honor and dignity of the Jewish people.



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Journalist BRAZUL-BRUSHKOVSKY
Witness for the Defense

A BRAVE CHRISTIAN DEFENDER OF JEWS

By

ARNOLD MARGOLIN

S. I. Brazul-Brushkovsky was about forty-six years old when he died. He was the descendant of an ancient Russian Orthodox family. He married a Jewish girl of culture and refinement. At the time of the Beilis trial he was contributor to the then largest liberal newspaper in Kiev, the *Kievskaya Mysl*.

Brazul-Brushkovsky first became interested in the trial as criminal reporter of the local press of Kiev and Odessa. Soon, however, the affair absorbed him entirely from a purely humanitarian viewpoint. The abominable anti-Jewish campaign conducted by the anti-Semitic elements of St. Petersburg and Kiev in connection with the murder of the Christian boy Andrey Yustchinsky, aroused the indignation of the honest journalist.

He knew that from the very beginning the police and the criminal examining officials had come upon the traces of the true character of the crime. He knew that it was then the opinion of the highly competent, widely experienced and noble person, the extraordinary examining magistrate, Vassili Ivanovitch Fenenko, that the boy had been murdered by a group of professional criminals, who wished to get rid of him as he happened to know or witness some of their crimes.

Brazul also knew that this Fenenko was powerless in his struggle with the Black Hundred, then headed by the Minister of Justice, Shtcheglovitov himself and by the prosecuting attorney of the Supreme Court of Appeals of Kiev, Chaplinsky. Those arch-enemies of Jewry had resolved to prosecute Beilis on the charge of ritual murder.

Brazul-Brushkovsky thereupon resolved to devote all his energy in fighting this hideous accusation thrown upon the Jews and to bring to light the actual murderers. With this object in view, he made his way to the very bottom of the underworld of Kiev, to use his own expression. And this meant, of course, the utmost self-sacrifice, and risking his very life. He acted with determination, never sparing time or health, but energetically pursuing his course.

He became especially interested in Vera Tcheberiak, who later became famous for her central part in the drama. This woman had long been suspected by the police, for her house was the rendezvous of professional robbers and most dangerous criminals. Owing, however, to her dexterity and resourcefulness, no charge could be brought against her. Then, too, she had the advantage of being the wife of a postal-telegraph official and a "nobleman".

This "nobleman" was a semi-idiot and no more than a

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plaything in the hands of his criminal wife. While the imbecile was spending his nights on duty at the telegraph office, Vera was indulging in orgies with criminals of all descriptions in her house.

Tchebiriak's home was in close proximity to Zaitzev's brick-kiln, where Beilis was employed as a clerk. This outskirt of Kiev is surrounded by empty lots, woods and caves. In one of these caves the dead body of the Yustchinsky boy was discovered in March, 1911.

Even early in Autumn, 1911, police officials were quoted as saying that all traces of murder led to the Tchebiriak house. And the examining magistrate Fenenko would often tell me (I was then organizing the first defense of Beilis), in the course of private and intimate talks, that Tchebiriak knew all. . . .

Brazul-Brushkovsky consequently becomes a daily visitor in the Tchebiriak home. He witnesses a quarrel between the Tchebiriak woman and her former lover, a certain Paul Miffle. Two years before, the face and eyes of this Miffle had been burned by carbolic acid, to which the jealous Vera Tchebiriak then treated her lover. At the subsequent trial, Miffle then appealed to the court that Tchebiriak be acquitted, and so she once more had escaped justice, having been acquitted by a jury. Now, however, it was Tchebiriak's blind lover, beating her, and there was no end to their quarrels.

This proved a most lucky circumstance for our purposes. When I conveyed this information about the quarrelling pair to the examining Magistrate Fenenko, the latter was pleased immensely. "If they quarrel now", he remarked, "then they will soon be betraying one another". .

It was Fenenko's opinion even at that early stage of the investigation that Tchebiriak was not merely a witness,

but had probably been a participant of the murder. The woman was conscious of Fenenko's suspicions, and she was exerting herself in an effort to divert the investigation to other directions. For this purpose she was furnishing all kinds of false witnesses, who brought testimony now against the relatives of the slain boy, now against Beilis.

Seeing, however, that Fenenko put no trust in all these false witnesses Tchebiriak determined to make use of Brazul-Brushkovsky in a new attempt to shift the investigation to a false direction. She demanded of Brazul that he take her to Kharkov, where she would see a certain Lissunov, a member of a gang of thieves, after which she would disclose the entire mystery of the Yustchinsky murder and name the murderers.

Brazul-Brushkovsky complied with her request and took her to Kharkov. That was in December, 1911. There was, however, no Lissunov in Kharkov. And to the present day Tchebiriak's motive in referring to this Lissunov remains a mystery.

Upon their arrival in Kharkov, Brazul at once took her for an interview to my hotel, as I, too, went simultaneously to that city, as was agreed beforehand. And here Tchebiriak told us that the murder was committed by the brothers Miffle together with the relatives of the slain youth. She gave a complete account of the scene of the murder and pointed out, as the motive for the crime, the desire of the Miffles and her to get rid of Yustchinsky, who happened to witness their crimes.

Brazul-Brushkovsky thought it possible that this time Tchebiriak told the truth and assumed her present version as a true account of the murder. However, I agreed with Fenenko that Tchebiriak is to be looked at as something more than a mere witness. I therefore advised and insisted

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that Brazul file at once a statement with the prosecuting attorney as to the new version of Tchebiriak and simultaneously publish this statement in the press. This was done in January, 1912.

Fenenko's prophesy at once came true. No sooner was the statement in the newspapers read by Miffle, than the latter, seeing that he was being charged with the murder of Yustchinsky, went at once to the prosecuting attorney and gave his testimony to two crimes committed by Tchebiriak; forging of a document and buying stolen articles. And so strong was the evidence that even the black attorney, Chaplinsky, could not save her, his star witness against Beilis, from prosecution and punishment. Tchebiriak was consequently sentenced to imprisonment and the loss of the so-called "special rights".

When subsequently Beilis appeared before a jury the Tchebiriak woman was figuring in the proceedings of the court no more as the "virtuous wife of a nobleman and a postal-telegraph official", but as a criminal sentenced by a court and as the hostess of a den of criminals, as a forger and buyer of stolen articles.

This alone would suffice to immortalize the name of the late Brazul-Brushkovsky, the honest and modest newspaper worker. But the statement which he then published was destined to lead to far greater and more important results. A well-known police official and former chief of the local secret service, a certain Krassovsky, had also read in the press of the work of Brazul-Brushkovsky and at once determined to join him. Their efforts at once brought results, and in the spring of 1912 we had already a more or less complete account of all the circumstances and motives of the murder, and knew the participants: they

were Vera Tchebiriak, her brother Singayevsky, Latisheff and Rudnitzky.

Even the reactionary newspaper Kievlianin, which was edited by the anti-Semite Pichno, and after his death by the anti-Semite V. Shulgin—both well-known “Blacks”—even this anti-Semitic organ admitted that the new revelations of Krassovsky and Brazul were decisive, and it demanded that Tchebiriak be tried on the charge of murdering Yustchinsky.

But this was contrary to the designs of Shtcheglovitov and Chaplinsky, and they preferred not to heed this word of counsel, dictated by common sense and elementary conscience. It is true, they ordered a new investigation, but at the same time they hastened to make Krassovsky “harmless”, imprisoning him on some fantastic charge.

The new investigation was no more than a mere farce and Beilis was finally brought again to trial. However, in spite of all the efforts of the Black Hundreds, of all the forgeries, abuses of power and other illegal methods, the jury could not make up their minds to issue a verdict of “guilty” for Beilis. And so Beilis was acquitted.

Soon after this Chaplinsky had his revenge upon Brazul-Brushovsky. He was arrested on the charge that he did not take his hat off at some agricultural exhibition when the anthem “God Save the Czar” was being played. The Kiev Supreme Court was a tool in Chaplinsky’s hands, and Brazul was sentenced for “offending His Majesty” to one year’s solitary imprisonment in the Fortress. This was a really unheard-of severity of punishment for so trifling a misdemeanor. And so Brazul-Brushkovsky served a year’s term in the Fortress . . .

He was subjected to many other persecutions for his

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part in the Beilis affair. But all these persecutions did not break his honesty and moral strength in defending dishonored Jewry and that innocent victim of anti-Semitic intrigue, Mendel Beilis. And to the end of his days he remained what we knew him to be at the time of the Beilis trial.



IN MEMORIAM

RABBI JACOB MAZE

(1860-1924)

In the death of Rabbi Jacob Maze the Jews of eastern Europe have lost one of their most distinguished, active and unique representatives of the past few decades.

Jacob Maze was born in 1860 in the province of Mohilev. He graduated from the Moscow University (faculty of law).

However, he never practiced a legal profession. Notwithstanding his natural gift of eloquence he was never attracted by the profession of law but preferred to devote himself entirely to a direct defense of the interests of his people.

His article in the "Hamelitz" attracted general attention. He was one of the earliest advocates of the so called "Palestinophile" idea and was very active in rendering assistance to Jewish colonists in Palestine and Syria.

Especially popular became the name of Maze since 1893, when he was chosen to the post of chief rabbi of Moscow. This post he held uninterruptedly until his death. His sermons on the religious and moral topics and his addresses on social and political problems were admirable examples of oratory, both in substance and in form. Under all three regimes,—the Czarist regime, the brief rule of the Provisional Government, under Lvov, Milukov and Kerensky, and the Bolsheviks regime—

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Rabbi Maze never failed to hold high the Jewish banner and always knew how to defend effectively and tactfully the honor and dignity of his Jewish people.

The author of the present article had occasion to become intimately acquainted with the personality and the extraordinary talents of Rabbi Maze in the course of the famous ritual trial of Mendel Beilis at Kiev. As is well known the attorney for the State summoned before the court in this trial not only experts on surgery but also a "specialist" on matters of Jewish Religion. This so called "specialist" was none other than the notorious adventurer and unfrocked catholic priest, Pranaitis, who had some time before been banished to Turkestan for some unsavory acts he had committed. In view of this, counsel for the defense, in turn, summoned experts on the Jewish religion. There were three Christians among them,—the Professors of Theology Troyitzki, Kokovtzev and Tikhomirov—and one Jew, Rabbi Maze.

The mendacious, shameless "expert testimony" given by Pranaitis was refuted by the scholarly testimony of these Christian theologians. However, as the late Jacob Maze correctly pointed out during that historical trial, it was not enough to prove that the Jewish religion contained *no reference* to the necessity or toleration of human sacrifice. It was necessary, as Rabbi Maze so picturesquely expressed it at the trial, "to reveal before the court not only the letter but also the spirit, *the soul* of the Jewish religion." This intention Rabbi Maze fully realized and he was most signally successful in revealing to the court and the vast throngs of spectators at the trial with genuine meaning and spirit of the Bible and the Talmud. I remember most distinctly the profound impression made by Rabbi Maze upon all those present from the very beginning, from the

very first words with which he opened his defense and expert testimony. "The Jewish religion has from the very outset regarded, and still regards, the Bible as its most sacred book. And the assertion that some new book exists which has superceded the Bible is rank calumny," Rabbi Maze solemnly declared. It was wonderful to listen what impressiveness and how much dignity there was in those words. Maze continued: "they say one may find almost anything he wants in the Talmud. Let it be so, let us admit that one may actually discover in the Talmud any idea and thought. There still remains a fact that you cannot find in the Talmud any suggestions to use human blood for a ritual purpose. . . . I have come here not to defend the truth, but to proclaim the truth!" Rabbi Maze concluded his preliminary remarks before giving his expert testimony.

This testimony, which revealed all the marvelous depth of Rabbi Maze's erudition, shows many extremely apt and brilliant passages and remarks. We shall here note only a few, bearing in mind the limitations of space.

"The Jewish people love the religions which have sprung from their bosom," said Rabbi Maze among other things. "Thus, for instance, the Jews loved the Mohammedans more than the Mohammedans loved the Jews." But this is as it should be, in accordance with the ancient truth that the parents love the children more than the children love the parents.

Demonstrating that the offering of sacrifices never played the foremost part in the Jewish ritual, Rabbi Maze very laconically but illuminatingly remarked that "among the Jews prayer stands higher than sacrifice."

The repugnance which the Jewish people feels for murder, and all shedding of blood was illustrated by Maze by a very appropriate reference to the period of King David.

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"When King David wanted to build temples," Rabbi Maze told the court, "The Lord said to him, 'it is not for thee to build me temples, for thou hast fought many wars and hast shed much blood.'"

The Beilis trial was held at a time when the reaction was in full swing in Russia, in October 1913. We all hoped and believed that this trial portended the approaching end of Russian despotism, that immediately after these final spasms and convulsions of the Black Hundreds of Russia better days were bound to come to the Jews and that a new, free, and happier day was dawning.

Thus far, alas, only the first part of these hopes had been fulfilled—the autocracy of the Czar has fallen. But all that which came so on after its downfall was destined to overwhelm the Jews of the former Russian Empire with calamities and trials without number. Happy and blessed those Jews who succeeded in tearing themselves away from the inferno of the anarchy and civil war in Russia and find refuge and asylum beyond the borders of the former Russian Empire.

Rabbi Maze was not among these fortunate ones, and this is to be explained not at all on the ground that *he could not leave Russia*. With his position, connections, intelligence and tact, he would, of course, have found ways and means of obtaining permission to leave Moscow. But he *did not want* to leave. He did not want to abandon his Jewish community of Moscow and Russian Jewry in general during these days of trial and misfortune. Like a captain of a ship foundering and sinking in a storm, he preferred to remain at his post until his last breath. He died in harness, fulfilling to the last his duties as rabbi of the Jewish community of Moscow.

May his ashes rest in peace and may his memory live forever among the Jews.

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